The Saturday Evening Post.

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LAURA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
BY CLIO STANLEY.

She came—like blossoms to the earth,
Like music of Spring showers,
Like any bright and pleasant thing
That lights the passing hours.

She came—a star within my sky,
When night was falling fast;
Beneath her smile 'gan blossoming
Days all too bright to last.

She went—like sunshine from the skies
When day lies down to die;
Like some bright bird, when summer winds
Have softly floated by.

She went—and all my life grew dark:
Love can invoke no spell
To call my darling back to me;
Her last kiss was farewell!

BIRDS OF PLUMAGE AND BIRDS OF SONG.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
BY ELLA WHEELER.

Eugenie Cuyler walked up and down the long piazza, restlessly spurning the train of her white dress with one gathered foot at each turn, and gnawing her red lip as she watched the long stretch of turnpiked road that ran east and west by Worthington House.

Mrs. Worthington, a matronly dame of fifty or thereabouts, sitting in one vine-shaded corner of the piazza, looked up at the young lady as she made her tenth trip with an amused smile.

"It seems to me you are very restless, Genie! What in the world ails you?"

Eugenie paused and threw herself down upon the bench by Mrs. Worthington's side.

"What a question when you know how impatient I am to see that expected guest, and that I cannot rest until she comes," Genie answered the least bit petulantly. For Miss Eugenie Cuyler was in the habit of answering anybody and everybody just as she chose, whether seniors or juniors, high or low, considering her lovely blond face and dainty apparel as giving her unlimited license.

"It is hardly time for the stage yet, and perhaps she may not come until to-morrow after all."

Just then a step sounded on the gravel walk and handsome Bliss Worthington came sauntering along, and sat down by his mother and Miss Cuyler.

"Are you not very impatient for the arrival of your *Fate*?" queried Genie, turning her forget-me-not blue eyes upon him in the sweetest way imaginable.

"Can a man have *two* Fates?" Bliss answered by a question, looking meaningly down into the blue eyes.

"Yes, an evil Fate and a good one."

"Then surely I ought not to be in any haste to meet my *evil Fate*."

"But your future wife will not prove that I hope."

Bliss laughed lightly.

"And you still persist in calling Miss Burleigh my future wife, I see," he said, "though you very well know there is not one chance in ten of her becoming so."

"I have no reason to think otherwise."

Bliss put one hand over both of hers and looked gravely down upon her.

"You are cruel," he said in a low voice, "to plague me so when you know my tongue is tied by my father's will for the present."

Genie dropped her golden lashes over her lovely blue eyes, not because she felt at all modest or abashed, but because she knew her lashes were long and thick, and the expression of her face was very Madonna-like when they were sweeping her cheeks.

"But you have never yet told me just how that will reads. I only know that if you refuse to marry Miss Burleigh you forfeit twenty thousand dollars."

"Well, I cannot give you the exact wording, but it is to the effect that when Retta Burleigh is eighteen, and I twenty-one, we are to meet, and if mutually pleased with each other we are to marry, and thus gratify the cherished desire of both her father and mine. And immediately upon our union we shall come into possession of a fine property, which Mr. Burleigh and my father, both now deceased, purchased together fourteen years ago for this express purpose. And if either one, or both, refuse to comply with the wishes of our parents, the property is to be given to a certain college somewhere in the locality of the property."

"How long is it since you have seen Miss Burleigh?"

"Let me see! she was five, and I eight, and as she is now eighteen and I twenty-one, it has been thirteen years since I saw her. That was one of the provisions of the will that we were not to see each other until we were old enough to form an unprejudiced opinion; and neither one was to make any engagement of marriage with other parties until we had spent two months beneath the same roof. That was to be immediately after Miss Burleigh's eighteenth birthday,

RETTA AND BLISS WORTHINGTON AT THE PIANO.

and that having passed she is coming to spend the summer with us."

"But I thought the *gentleman* usually did the *going* and the *seeking* in such cases," Miss Genie said a little sarcastically.

"I suppose they do when the lady has a home. But unfortunately Mr. Burleigh lost every cent of his property save what he and my father owned together before he died, and his daughter has for several years occupied the position of music teacher in a ladies' college. She had a taste for music, and it was finely cultivated before her father died. Therefore, as she has no home, being an orphan, we have invited her to spend the summer vacation with us. She is near sister Kate's age, and now that you are here she will not lack for society."

"Is she pretty?"

"A woman's question," laughed Bliss. "Sorry I cannot gratify your curiosity on that point. I remember very little about her, but have an idea that she is brown or black-eyed, and that is all I know. You have not long to wait before you will have the opportunity of judging for yourself."

"The stage is just climbing the hill," called Kate from the chamber window where she had been sitting and watching for the last half hour. She, too, was restless and nervous concerning the expected guest.

Genie Cuyler and she had been schoolmates, and each told the other she was her "dearest friend," after the manner of school girls. Just now it seemed to Kate the only desirable thing in the world that Genie should marry Bliss. She had invited her there for that purpose. Kate had a lover, and was to be married the following spring, and she had a romantic desire to have a double wedding like the heroine of a novel, and have her "dearest friend" and her brother the other two characters. Then Genie was of *such* a fine family; her grandfather's uncle had been a count or something of the kind, and Genie was supposed to have "noble" blood in her veins.

Things had progressed delightfully, all beyond Kate's wildest anticipations. Bliss, who on several of Genie's former school girl visits, had seemed rather indifferent to her charms, now was very attentive, and evidently very much in love. Kate felt sure it would all end as she desired, if this "coming girl" did not make mischief. But if she should be prettier than Genie, and more fascinating—why all *might* be spoiled, for Bliss was *not* the most constant young man in the world, and twenty thousand dollars was not to be scoffed at. Of course the girl would exert every energy to win him, for she was a poor music teacher, and then Bliss was *so* handsome and charming. No wonder Kate watched at the window.

The stage rumbled and jolted up and down the hill, around the curve in the road, and then straight over the smooth stretch of highway, to the gate of "Worthington House," where it paused.

Mrs. Worthington and Bliss both went down to the gate to meet their guest, while Genie flew up to Kate's room, and watched from the window.

A very small, slender little figure emerged from the coach door.

"Too small to be stylish or graceful," was Kate's comment, as she came up the path. "I wish she would lift her veil."

Just at the foot of the steps she paused, and lifted her veil as she answered some question of the coachman concerning her luggage. And the two girls watching so anxiously above, saw a decidedly plain little face, brown as a berry.

"Face, hair, eyes, and dress, are all of one color," laughed Genie, "which proves that she is a person of taste."

Both girls felt that a weight of lead had been lifted from their hearts. And Miss Genie made a most bewitching toilet for tea, and as Kate declared, "never in all her life looked so lovely;" which assertion ought to have been satisfactory to Genie, as Kate had told her upon several other occasions, that she "looked perfect."

Miss Burleigh's dress was a fleecy white that evening—but as Genie had said, her face, hair, and eyes, were certainly very much of a color, and that was a quiet *brown*. That she could not lay claim to any beauty was certain, but her manner was free from all affectation—a rare thing among young ladies—and her voice very pleasing.

Half an hour after tea Kate went out upon the front veranda, where she found Bliss smoking his segar.

"Well, brother mine, what do you think? will you accept or forfeit the twenty thousand dollars," she asked, laughing lightly to mask her earnestness.

Bliss tossed his segar down into the shrubbery below.

"I would forfeit every cent I possessed, before I would yield to the conditions of the will. Why, Kate, a man would be demented who could think of her, were she rich as Croesus, as long as he had a hope of obtaining Eugenie. There is as vast a difference between them, as there is between a little ground-bird and a beautiful bird-of-paradise."

Kate's eyes sparkled.

"I am glad you like Genie," she said, "she is a beautiful girl, and Miss Burleigh looks very plain beside her, as you say. She will be very much disappointed no doubt, in not obtaining you and the money, but I am glad you are not ready to sacrifice yourself. But we must make her visit as pleasant as possible. Poor girl, I feel half sorry for her already, for no doubt she has cherished this hope all her life."

Kate went down to her guests, and Bliss sat a few moments enjoying the moonlight, and lost in a blissful reverie of blue eyes, and golden tresses, and rosy cheeks. Suddenly the sound of the grand piano in the parlor below broke upon the air. There were a few rippling notes, like the dropping of waters, and then such a burst of glorious harmony as made the blood leap in Bliss's veins. He was passionately fond of music, and really excelled in it himself. But this was music such as he had heard but a few times in his life. Somebody's Grand Mazon, full of odd, strange passages, and quick changes, ranging through half a dozen octaves, and breaking from mournful wails into victorious blasts of melody, and all played with such exquisite taste and in such perfect time.

It was not Kate—for her music always set Bliss's teeth on edge. It was not Genie, for she could not read one note from another, vowing that a sheet of music was more of a riddle to her than a Sanscrit Bible.

Then surely it must be Miss Burleigh who was making such wonderful melody. Bliss sat a few moments in stupified delight, and then rising, turned his steps down stairs.

Miss Burleigh was seated at the piano, Miss Cuyler and Kate in the open door, and Mrs. Worthington by the window. All three were silent, and Bliss seated himself upon the lounge behind the quiet musician and drank in the glorious sounds.

"I beg of you to go on: do not stop now, after giving us a foretaste of Heaven," Bliss exclaimed, as Miss Burleigh paused.

She turned her quiet eyes upon him, arching her brows a little.

"Indeed, Mr. Worthington, you here?" she said with provoking indifference in tone and face. "So you like music, do you? I am glad, for I think people very stupid who do not care for it, and I should regret to find you stupid."

Eugenie winced a little, for her indifference to all kinds of music was well known. Kate bridled.

"Oh no, Miss Burleigh," she said quickly, "you will be spared that regret, for Bliss is a *very fine* musician himself. I like his music better than any other I ever heard."

"Oh, Kate, don't!" Bliss exclaimed; but Miss Burleigh rose from the instrument with a pleasant smile.

"In that case I shall be most happy to resign my seat for awhile and listen to him, for it is so long since I have heard any *good* music, that it will be quite a treat."

"I beg you to excuse me, and do not credit Kate's statement, for she is a prejudiced judge," Bliss began; but Miss Burleigh interrupted, in her provokingly cool way—

"Now don't, I pray you, play the fashionable young lady and offer excuses, in order to be urged, for it is silly in her and would be doubly so in you. Please play."

What could Bliss do after that but sit down and play his best? Miserably poor that seemed to him after what he had heard.

"Well, yes, you play *very* well, indeed," Miss Burleigh acknowledged in such a patronizing manner that he felt infinitesimally small. "But I think I must have heard more musicians than Miss Kate, for I have heard music which I thought excelled yours. At least it suited me better. However, I like your style very much. Do you sing?"

"Not alone. I sing bass, and would like to accompany you in some songs if you also sing. Do you?"

"A little," Miss Burleigh said, and took her seat again at the piano. "Please select something you like from your sister's music."

Bliss picked out a sheet of difficult opera music, arranged for two voices, male and female. He had studied on it for weeks, and mastered all the difficulties.

"Here is something fine," he said. "Did you ever see it?"

Miss Burleigh glanced at it. "No, I never saw it, but let us try it." She hummed a few bars over softly to herself, played the difficult prelude with perfect ease, and then struck into the air. Her voice was a glorious soprano, clear, strong, high and pure. It rang out like the notes of a bugle in the weird, wild, passionate song, and even Genie felt a strange thrill as the wonderful sounds rolled out. She had a finely cultivated voice, as well as a natural gift of song, and while she rendered the *music* perfectly, every word was distinctly and plainly uttered.

"I should think you *could* sing a little," cried Bliss at the end of the song. "Why, you are a second to Jenny Lind! You could make a fortune with your voice."

"But supposing my fortune is already made?" Kate and Genie exchanged glances, and Bliss looked conscious. "Oh! I do not mean that stupid affair of the will," she hastened to say. "That is so entirely and utterly absurd that I scarcely ever think or speak of it."

The subject had not been mentioned between them before, and it was rather galling to Bliss to have her the first to speak, and in this ridiculing manner. It hurt his pride and his self-love.

Mrs. Worthington broke the awkward silence that ensued.

"You have indeed a remarkable voice, Miss Burleigh; but what I appreciate most is the distinct manner in which you sing the words of a song. I could understand it all, which is very uncommon with modern singers. I am just old-fashioned enough to desire to hear the *words* of a song, as well as the music. I suppose it is because I have not a 'cultivated ear,' but I really can see no beauty in singing, be the voice ever so fine, when not one word is spoken plainly."

"Nor I," declared Bliss, "though I am aware that it is very old-fashioned, as you say, mother. I cannot conscientiously praise a lady's singing when she mumbles her words in the present fashionable style."

"I wonder what introduced the absurd fashion?" asked Mrs. Worthington.

Miss Burleigh smiled. "I suppose," she said, "it is done in imitation of those opera singers, who sing in foreign languages. Of course, foreign songs are only appreciated by those who understand the language, but the singers have beautifully cultivated voices and receive high commendations, and the fashionable young lady imagines, by making the words of her English song unintelligible, that she is singing a foreign song, and equalling, if not excelling, some famous Prima Donna."

Bliss laughed. "I believe you are right," he said, "but it is an absurd fashion anyhow. Please give us another song."

While she was singing, Bliss whispered to Kate, "Our guest is a *brown thrush*, instead of a ground bird, Kate."

Kate tossed her head. She did not like Bliss's enthusiasm over Miss Burleigh's music. She had considered her so unattractive beside Genie that she was more than annoyed upon the discovery that the plain brown little thing possessed a talent and accomplishment which put Genie completely in the shade.

Genie was inwardly burning with envy and jealousy, but managed to hide it with a calm exterior.

Genie and Kate, who occupied one bedroom, were awakened at an unusually early hour the following morning by the sound of the piano, and two voices in song—Miss Burleigh and Bliss singing a duet—and all the forenoon these two sat at the piano, singing and playing, and Kate and Genie were left to entertain themselves.

"Is there a store of any kind in this vicinity?" asked Miss Burleigh one afternoon as they were all out on the piazza. "I want to make a purchase of a pair of riding gloves before that excursion that is planned comes off."

"There is a very convenient fancy store and dry goods establishment just below us," Bliss said, "and I am going down this evening. Give me your number, and I shall be pleased to make the purchase for you."

"Thank you, laughed Miss Burleigh; but I would rather you would not get them, as it would cause me to tell a fib."

"Why, how so?" asked Bliss wonderingly.

"Because I should, out of politeness, be obliged to say they suited me, when they certainly would not. I am *never* suited with anything which is *picked out* for me. I prefer to do my own selecting."

Bliss colored and winced; the hidden meaning of the words did not escape him, and Kate's lover—a gay, dashing young man from the city—who knew the circumstances connected with the will, laughed gayly and aggravatingly.

"In that case I shall be most happy to give you a ride down to the store behind my ponies this evening, when you can make your own purchases."

"Thanks! I shall be glad to go."

Miss Burleigh had monopolized Bliss's attentions all that day at the piano, and Genie was ready to cry with vexation when she saw them ride off together. Things were assuming a serious aspect, and that "plain little thing," who had hair, eyes, and complexion all of one color, somehow managed to get more attention than she with her blonde beauty did. Every man who came to Worthington House seemed bewitched by her droll, quiet wit and magnificent voice.

Bliss came into the parlor one day, and found Genie alone, by a window, and throwing himself into a chair by her side, fell to chatting in his old familiar style.

How handsome he was, and how tenderly he looked at her! Genie's heart beat high with hope. But five minutes later he called out to Miss Burleigh, as she was passing the door.

"Retta"—he had grown to call her Retta—"please come in and play to me. I feel horribly blue and stupid, and nothing but your music can revive my spirits."

Genie felt her hopes suddenly fall, but she determined to make the best of the matter. Miss Burleigh came in, and opening the piano, dashed off into a bewildering waltz, that sent the blood leaping through Bliss's veins. Genie, determined to like what he liked, said, "Oh, how nice!" at its close, and then asked Miss Burleigh if she would please play a waltz. Bliss colored, and Miss Burleigh, with an amused smile, answered,

"That was a waltz I just played, but I will play another for you."

Genie could have boxed her own ears, at her stupid blunder. She had played a poor card. After all, she believed Miss Burleigh would win him! Kate was tormented with the fear, too. Bliss was surely "making a fool of himself," she declared, and she must beat around the bushes, and see if he was in earnest. So one day she began. "Don't you think you are paying rather too much attention to Retta, Bliss? You are giving her reason to entertain hopes which can never be realized of course, and it will only

make her disappointment the greater and more bitter if you lead her to think you care for her now."

"Well, madam Kate, supposing I do care for her!" Bliss burst out with such vehemence that Kate was startled. "I think I can manage my own affairs without any assistance."

"But you know you said she was so insignificant beside Genie, and a man would be demented—"

"I never said any such thing," Bliss interrupted stoutly, "and if I did *I* was demented. Genie is a very pretty little girl, but she is no more to be compared with Retta than is a humming-bird with a golden robin."

"Oh," was all Kate said, but she lost all hope from that moment.

Bliss was certainly very far gone. "That girl" had woven her meshes around him in some mysterious manner, and she must endeavor to like her, now that she was to be her sister—so she told her mother that night in confidence.

"She has got around Bliss in *some* way, mother, and we must endeavor to feel resigned. I had hoped to have Genie for a sister, but then there will be one comfort in the thought that dear papa's wishes and desires are being carried out, and Bliss's fortune will be increased."

Genie felt decidedly melancholy when she first concluded that she had really lost Bliss, and hated Miss Burleigh cordially. But Kate's lover brought a young man down from the city with him one day—a dashing, flashy sort of a youth—who immediately fell in love with Miss Genie, and there was *some* comfort in that. He became a frequent visitor at Worthington House, and though he was rather weak-brained and decidedly insignificant beside Bliss, she found some consolation in being adored by him.

The days went by, and it was the third week in July. Miss Burleigh had been at Worthington House seven weeks. After two weeks more she would be going away. The seven weeks had been pleasant to her, and more than pleasant to Bliss.

He came and sat down close at her side, one twilight evening as she sat at the piano, playing and singing softly. All the rest were out in the garden somewhere, Kate and her lover, Genie and Gus Walters, her milk-and-water lover, and they had the parlor to themselves.

The night was as cool as October—almost chilly, and Retta wore some kind of a woollen dress, a bright crimson in color, and crimson bows of ribbon were stuck here and there in her brown hair. What would look gaudy or bold on another woman looked becoming and charming when worn by her. Bliss had grown to think crimson and scarlet—Retta's favorite colors—the prettiest hues in the world. Blue seemed decidedly tame.

"You look like some beautiful Southern bird as you sit here in the twilight," he said reaching out one hand and taking hers.

"Do I?" she laughed. "I hope you are not going to cage me."

"But I am, if you will let me! and it shall be no common cage either, but a beautiful one, worthy of its occupant. Oh, Retta! what shall I do after you go away?"

"Do just as you did all the years before I came."

"Ah but that is impossible. For then I had never seen you, and of course did not love you. Now I *have* seen you, and *do* love you. Oh, Retta, will you stay with me *always*—even as our fathers desired and planned when we were children? Will you, Retta?'

Retta waited until he finished, and then looked up quietly.

"I would do a great deal to please you, my friend," she said, demurely, "but I can not consent to your proposition."

"But Retta, you *can't* mean that you utterly refuse me—that you will never marry me, never be my wife?"

"But I *do* mean just that. I have no love to give you, as I have given that along with my heart to the man I shall marry before very long. He knows that I love him, but of course I could not *honorably* make an engagement of marriage, until I had spent two months beneath the roof with you. He is coming to see me next week, and then I shall give him the answer he has waited so patiently for."

"But why have you deceived me so?" cried Bliss, despairingly. "You were *cruel* and heartless, to make me think you loved me, only to cast me aside."

Miss Burleigh smiled.

"No, only *just*," she said, "I wanted to teach you a lesson. You thought I came here determined to catch you, against your will. You, your sister, and the bird of paradise, were all watching and commenting upon the movements and appearance of the poor little ground-bird. Why you must be *demented*, to think of *me*, while you had a hope of obtaining Miss Cuyler! My dear friend, be careful when you next give your opinion of a lady, that you do not speak incautiously loud, especially if you are sitting upon a verandah that runs immediately under the open window of her room. I came here with the friendliest of feelings towards you, determined to tell you immediately that I did not second the wishes of our parents, and that my affections were already engaged, but that I felt it a duty to spend the eight weeks here, before forming any engagement of marriage. I had no desire to win your love, or to monopolize your attentions, but happening to overhear your conversation with your sister the evening of my arrival, and having noticed Miss Cuyler's belligerent glances toward me, I concluded I would not mention my peaceable intentions, but let things take their own course. If I have taught you a lesson, I am glad; and I surely have convinced you that I did not come here to *force* you to marry me."

Two days later the stage set down a stranger at the gate of Worthington House. A splendidly handsome man, evidently somewhere in his thirties, who wore the finest of broadcloth and linen, with the air of one who had always been accustomed to it, whose voice was melody itself, and whose manner was the refinement of dignity and grace. Even elegant Bliss Worthington looked common beside him. Miss Burleigh introduced him as "Mr. Morril, a friend of mine from home."

Bliss knew well enough who he was, and whispered it to his mother and Kate when they expressed curiosity about the stranger. Retta told them herself the next day.

"Mr. Morril is a wealthy banker," she said, "whom I became acquainted with while teaching music in M—— Seminary. I am going to marry him next winter, and I hope you, Mrs. Worthington, and Kate will both visit me occasionally in my new home."

Bliss tried to find a flaw in Mr. Morril after the manner of rejected lovers toward their rivals, but failed to find him anything but a perfect gentleman, and the two became excellent friends.

Miss Burleigh left in company with Mr. Morril the next week, and returned to her position in the seminary. Christmas she sent her cards to Bliss. "Miss Retta Burleigh" and "Mr. and Mrs. Ward Morril." Eugenie's visit was prolonged into August and September, and a few weeks after her return home Bliss followed her. And all that winter he had frequent errands cityward. Kate's hopes were raised again, this time not to be disappointed. For in April there was a double wedding in "Grace Church," Kate Worthington and Eugenie Cuyler being the brides. Mrs. Ward Morril smiled a little when the cards were brought to her by the postman, and her husband coming in just then and wanting to know the cause of her smile, she told him the story of her summer at Worthington House.

"Served him right," laughed Mr. Morril; "but I am glad he has found a comforter in the shape of a nice little wife. I find that to be a panacea for all the ills of life; but he has only a bird of plumage, while I have a bird of song."

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, SEPT. 16, 1871.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE CLYFFARDS OF CLYFFE. By the author of "Lost Sir Massingberd," "Carlyon's Year," etc. Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philada.

FRENCH, GERMAN, SPANISH, LATIN, AND ITALIAN LANGUAGES WITHOUT A MASTER. By A. H. MONTEITH, Esq. All in one volume. Published by T. B Peterson & Bros., Philada.

LILIAN; OR, DID SHE DO RIGHT? By MARTHA FARQUHARSON, author of "Elsie Dinsmore," etc. Published by William B. Evans & Co., 740 Sansom St., Philada.

DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE OF FRUITS. Cultivated and for sale by Ellwanger & Barry, Mount Hope Nurseries, Rochester, New York.

Old Letters.

Is there any thing sadder than the files of old family letters, where one seems to spell backward one's own future? The frail fabric of paper is still firm, while the strong hand that poured out upon it the heart's throbs of love, of hate, of hope, or of despair, is mouldering in the grave. Letters filled with anxieties, blessed, perhaps, in their realization; or hopes, defeated in their very accomplishment; letters soiled with professions of everlasting affection that exhaled with a few mornings' dews; and others, stamped with sincere love, that seems, as the time-stained sheet trembles in the hand, to breathe from Heaven upon it; letters with announcements of births to be received with a family all hail! and with the fond records of opening childhood—and then—the black-lined sheet, and the hastily-broken seal, and the story of sickness and death; letters with gay disclosures of betrothals, of illimitable hopes and sweet reliance; and a little further down in the file, conjugal dissatisfactions, bickering and disappointments; and perchance the history from year to year of happy married love, tried and made stronger by trial, cemented by every joy, brightened all along its course by cheerfulness and patience, and home loves and charities; but even in this there is solemnity, for it is past. The sheaves are gathered into the garner, and on earth is nothing left but the seared stubble-field.

Letters of Recommendation.

A gentleman advertised for a boy to assist him in his office, and nearly fifty applicants presented themselves to him. Out of the whole number he in a short time selected one and dismissed the rest.

"I should like to know," said a friend, "on what ground you selected that boy who had not a single recommendation."

"You are mistaken," said the gentleman, "he had a great many. He wiped his feet when he came in, and closed the door after him, showing that he was careful; he gave up his seat instantly to that lame old man, showing he was kind and thoughtful; he took off his cap when he came in, and answered my questions promptly and respectfully, showing he was polite and gentlemanly; he picked up the book which I had purposely laid upon the floor, and replaced it on the table, while all the rest stepped over it or shoved it aside; and he waited quietly for his turn, instead of pushing and crowding, showing that he was honest and orderly. When I talked with him I noticed that his clothes were carefully brushed, his hair in nice order, and his teeth as white as milk; and when he wrote his name I noticed that his finger nails were clean, instead of being tipped with jet, like that handsome little fellow's in the blue jacket. Don't you call those things letters of recommendation? I do, and I would give more for what I can tell about a boy by using my eyes ten minutes than all the fine letters he can bring me."

Integrity.

Integrity is a virtue which costs much. In the period of passion, it takes self-denial to keep down the appetites of the flesh; in the time of ambition, with us far more dangerous, it requires very much earnestness of character to keep covetousness within its proper bounds, not to be swerved by love of the praise of men, or official power over them. But what a magnificent recompense does it bring to any and every man! Any pleasure which cost conscience a single pang is really a pain, and not a pleasure. All gain which robs you of your integrity is a gain which profits not; it is a loss. Honor is infamy if won by the sale of your own soul. But what womanly and manly delight does this costly virtue bring into our consciousness, here and elsewhere!—*Theodore Parker.*

☞ The olive trees of Hebron are still yielding fruit.

☞ Pail creatures—dairy maids.

☞ I have come to the conclusion, if man or woman either wishes to realize the full power of personal beauty, it must be by cherishing noble hopes and purposes; by having something to do and something to live for which is worthy of humanity, and which, by expanding the capacities of the soul, gives expansion and symmetry to the body which contains it.—*Professor Upham.*

☞ Olive Logan is going to lecture this season on "Nine Young Men." Last year she lectured on "Girls." A crusty bachelor friend hopes to goodness she won't get those two lectures mixed.

ON SILVER WINGS.

BY THE AUTHOR of "Joyce Dormer's Story."

CHAPTER XXIX.

"WHISPERING TONGUES CAN POISON TRUTH."

"You must tell me all about Broadmead," said Lady Pechford. "I quite long to hear about it. I do not find my cousin, Mr. Carteret, half so communicative as I could wish."

Miss Pyecroft nodded significantly, and the nod was not lost on Lady Pechford, who, however, went on without seeming to observe it—

"My heart is quite drawn towards the place, since an old friend of mine is there—one whom I knew in my youthful days"—here Lady Pechford waxed sentimental, and sighed slightly—"those golden days with roses crowned, Miss Pyecroft, that once lost never return to us again. You have reminiscences—sweet reminiscences—yourself, without doubt?"

Miss Pyecroft nodded a little testily, saying to herself, "French, French," and would probably have added "Rousseau," had she known anything of him; but as "Rousseau's Dream"—which was occasionally used as a hymn tune at Broadmead—was the only association she had with the French philosopher, the link was too slight to serve her at the present crisis.

"Yes," continued Lady Pechford; "in my early married life, I hope I profited by the ministry of Dr. Crawford, then a curate at Driffington. The heart returns to those old days very pleasantly, and I should like to hear him preach once more."

"A very sound preacher," interposed Miss Pyecroft. "You would be sure of good orthodoxy from him."

"Ah!" said Lady Pechford, inwardly recoiling from the description: and then, relapsing into the sentimental again, she proceeded—"but one hears with different ears in the blossom-time, and when the fruit is in its prime—or when it is decaying! But you must describe Broadmead to me: I seem to have so many associations with it. Let me see—my cousin, Mr. Carteret, one; the Crawfords, two; Captain Stanfield and his son, three; Mrs. Seaton, four. I used to know Mrs. Seaton long, long ago; but it is ages since we met. We should see strange alterations in one another." And Lady Pechford glanced complacently at a mirror. Do people grow old very, very fast at Broadmead, Miss Pyecroft?'

Miss Pyecroft bridled up a little; she gave a prim smile, and then replied, in a matter-of-fact manner—

"I am sixty-eight, Lady Pechford"—as if leaving Lady Pechford to answer to herself as to the ravages of time in the quiet village.

"Sixty-eight!"—and Lady Pechford elevated her eyebrows. "Is it possible!" she exclaimed, with an accent worthy of the son-in-law of James II.—"is it possible? And not a streak of silver in your hair. Mine is very gray."

And she regarded the stiff frizzed curls, shaded by the blonde of Miss Pyecroft's cap, with admiration.

Miss Pyecroft coughed uncomfortably. There was a slight struggle in her mind between truth, and a certain awkwardness of having to speak of what she had never before found herself in a position to state in so many words. Truth, however, had the upper hand.

"I wear a front, Lady Pechford," said Miss Pyecroft, throwing as much dignity into the confession as it was possible to do.

"I beg your pardon," said Lady Pechford hastily, suddenly roused to a sense of the ludicrous; and she glided into another subject.

"We shall have a quiet evening together. I hope, for I have not asked any one in to-night. I thought you would be tired after your journey; and besides, I wanted to have a confidential talk with you, Miss Pyecroft. I have quite looked forward to your coming; and now that I have seen you, I feel quite sure that I may trespass upon your kindness, and say just what I like to you, with the certainty that it will go no farther. May I not?" pleaded Lady Pechford, with one of her most insinuating smiles.

"Certainly, Lady Pechford, certainly," responded Miss Pyecroft, wondering what Lady Pechford could possibly wish to consult her about. Probably, some point of doctrine; for Miss Pyecroft plumed herself upon her doctrine, and was not afraid of entering the theological lists with the most profound thinkers.

But after dinner, when they were comfortably seated in the drawing-room again, Miss Pyecroft found that the subject to be discussed was neither heterodoxy nor orthodoxy.

"You will be quite curious, Miss Pyecroft, to know what I am going to ask you about, and what I am going to confide to you; but I am not intending to look upon you as a stranger, for I seem to know you already, and so feel that, in my anxiety to do the best for my young relative—for it is about Mr. Carteret that I wish to consult you—you will give me the benefit of your superior wisdom."

Whenever Miss Pyecroft's superior wisdom was appealed to, she was disarmed at once; and, in fact—so far as a Pyecroft could be supposed to do so—she rather lost her balance.

"I am very anxious about my cousin," continued Lady Pechford. "When he came here I was given to understand—not at all definitely, only very vaguely, indeed—that there had been—that there was—a sort of love affair somewhere that was not very likely to come to anything. And somehow or other I have connected this vague rumor with Broadmead; and I have often wished to meet with some one who could satisfy my mind upon the subject, without in any way doing damage to what I fervently trust are Mr. Carteret's present prospects. And I feel, my dear Miss Pyecroft, that you can throw a light upon my cousin's sojourn at Broadmead, and can guide me by your judicious counsel.

"Well," returned Miss Pyecroft, "perhaps I may be able to do so, though I should be the last person to speak upon the subject if you had not asked me. I think I may say that, in all probability, the report *was* connected with Broadmead; and, indeed, I may say that at one time there was a very prevalent impression that Mr. Carteret was actually engaged. But this is most strictly confidential, Lady Pechford. I should not wish Mr. Carteret to think that I had ever breathed such an idea."

"Of course not—certainly not. I would not even insinuate it to him."

"The more especially," Miss Pyecroft went on, "as I have reason to believe that there was never anything in it beyond a mere flirtation."

"You relieve me beyond measure. And the young lady?"

Miss Pyecroft waxed mysterious.

"All's well that ends well, Lady Pechford. Second love is sometimes wiser than first."

"Now, what is the woman driving at?" thought Lady Pechford. "Can there be any one else in the case?" Then she said aloud—"I have been half fearing that there might be a sort of entanglement that he was repenting of, and that he felt it honorable to hold to, in spite of his wishes turning in another direction; for between ourselves, Miss Pyecroft, there is—" and Lady Pechford paused.

Miss Pyecroft bore down triumphantly.

"I think I can forestall what you are intending to tell me. Captain Stanfield mentioned something of it at Broadmead."

"Did he?" exclaimed Lady Pechford—"the dear, honest, straightforward creature! Who would have given him credit for being so discerning—so observing. But these simple, unsuspecting, seafaring men sometimes arrive at conclusions more quickly than we cautious women. Did he mention any name?"

"Wardlaw," said Miss Pyecroft.

"Capital!" ejaculated Lady Pechford.

"And some friends of mine at Comminster also spoke of it. They had been staying at Linthorp during the summer, and had seen what was going on."

"Ah!" returned Lady Pechford, "it is impossible to prevent these matters from becoming public, however quiet people may try to keep them. Sometimes I think that I will warn Mr. Carteret to be a little more careful; but then one sometimes does harm by intermeddling."

"Precisely my opinion, Lady Pechford. One should see and hear all that one possibly can, and say nothing. Leave people to manage their own affairs in their own way, and take no notice of what does not immediately concern one's self."

"My dear Miss Pyecroft, your sentiments are perfectly charming. Exactly my own ideas, and just what I am trying to carry out in the present case. I want to hear everything, and know everything, and lock it safely in the recesses of my own heart. And you so relieve me, by telling me that there has been nothing but a mere flirtation—no fear of broken hearts or broken vows."

"Broken hearts!" repeated Miss Pyecroft, with some acerbity. "No—I should think there was no fear of that. Diana—"

And Miss Pyecroft stopped—the name slipped out by accident.

"Diana!" said Lady Pechford, softly.

"I should not have mentioned the name, Lady Pechford; but I know that with you it is sacred."

"Perfectly so; but you must tell me a little more, now that you have roused my curiosity. Who is she? who is her father? who is her mother? what sort of people are they?"

"Both dead. Her father died without a penny, and left his daughter dependent upon the kindness of friends."

"Of course," said Lady Pechford to herself. "What an escape for John!" Then aloud—'We must hope that she will meet with a rich husband."

"No fear of not doing so," answered Miss Pyecroft, nodding mysteriously.

"She has, then, another string to her bow?" said Lady Pechford.

"And one not likely to break, if all that is said is true—Jasper Seaton."

"Seaton! I am positively more interested than I expected to be. The son of my old acquaintance, Mrs. Seaton, doubtless."

"But there is no engagement that I know of, Lady Pechford," said Miss Pyecroft, drawing in a little. "And I have never heard a word officially upon the subject, either from Mrs. Seaton, or Jasper, or Di. I don't suppose there is any regular engagement; but when two people are constantly together, one can easily see what it will end in."

"Certainly, certainly. And I wish Mr. Seaton success with all my heart—and a happy settlement of difficulties for all parties. You see, my dear Miss Pyecroft, that though it is all very well for a rich man like Mr. Seaton to marry a portionless girl, it would be the height of absurdity for a poor man without prospect to do so. John Carteret must look out for a fortune, since he has none himself."

"And I presume that I may conclude he has already done so."

"No, my dear Miss Pyecroft, you are to conclude nothing of the sort, from anything that I have said. You must use your own eyes; and if you like to put any faith in Captain Stanfield's, you may do so. But you must hold my communications to be as if they were all unsaid. No one must ever know that we have ever spoken upon the subject. We might destroy everything if we allowed people to know we were consulting over their destinies. No—I have told you none of my cousin's secrets, and you have told me none of the Broadmead gossip. We know without knowing: we see without having our attention called to it. And we take the gossip of the world for what it is worth."

Miss Pyecroft did not quite follow out Lady Pechford's argument—it sounded a little sophistical. It might only be, however, that there was a French atmosphere about everything, in which a Pyecroft found it difficult to breathe; and Miss Pyecroft began to feel a little uncertain whether, in the warmth of the confidential discussion, she had not said a little more than was quite wise.

"Remember, Lady Pechford, I do not believe that there is an engagement at present," were Miss Pyecroft's last words, as they parted for the night. "It may not even have entered into the minds of Diana and Jasper, for anything I know to the contrary."

"I quite understand," returned Lady Pechford," and you need have no fears about my discretion. But we will hope that the young lady may not be left without a lover."

When Miss Pyecroft was once again in the solitude of her own apartment, she carefully deposited her adornments in their several resting-places, threw on her dressing-gown, and putting on her spectacles, sat down to meditate. Why she put on her spectacles she might not have been able to explain; but she never could meditate comfortably without them—they seemed to bear with them an inspiration of wisdom, and in the present instance, protected her eyes from the blazing fire. She gazed into the flames, as though to draw from them some ray of light that might help her to understand Lady Pechford more completely.

"Very agreeable, very confiding, very taking—but very French," said Miss Pyecroft, poking the fire between each adjective. "If it were not that there is too much of the French element, I should say she was the most charming woman I had seen for some time. But one feels with her as with a foreigner almost: that the language is, somehow, different—little turns and twisting that one is not accustomed to in every-day life. I suppose I shall get accustomed to it in a day or two, and know where I am; but at present"—and Miss Pyecroft glanced round the room—"I feel as if I were in Paris without going there."

Lady Pechford had dismissed her maid. She, too, was pondering over the evening, and over the evening's guest.

"A pompous, good-natured, stupid old woman," said Lady Pechford. "She does not understand one-half of what she has told me. I see the case exactly—and John Carteret must not marry the girl. It would be madness. It would only end in misery; for the proverb's true enough—'When poverty comes in at that door, love flies out at the window.' No, my cousin, I will save you if I can; and some day we will laugh over it together, and you will thank me."

And Lady Pechford, meaning no ill, retired to rest. The world would go on better if she could only manage it. Such was her idea; and there was something amiable in her wish that it could be so. The drawback was, that other people might not agree with her. However, as it was an impossibility, she was obliged to content herself with things as they were, and be satisfied with catching at any straw that she could divert from its natural course.

By the time that Miss Pyecroft joined her friends in their lodgings, Lady Pechford had contrived that she should see with the eyes that she wished her to see with. And when she was fairly launched in Linthorp as a temporary inhabitant, she began to hear with the ears that the superficial Linthorp world heard with, and received as many false impressions as ordinary observers never fail to receive, upon which to found an estimate of things in general, and to form her own opinions of matters individually.

Nevertheless, she was much more cautious with others than she had been with Lady Pechford, whose manners and attentions had cast a glamour round her; and no one learned from her what John Carteret's experiences at Broadmead might have been.

Lady Pechford preserved a similar reticence, and never alluded to Broadmead, excepting in the most casual manner in connection with the Crawfords.

"I suppose you know very little of Miss Pyecroft?" she said one day to John Carteret. "She seems a pleasant sort of woman, but a little behind the age."

"She thinks, on the contrary, that the present age has not arrived at her standard," returned John Carteret, smiling.

"Ah, well—the result is the same, whichever way one puts it," answered Lady Pechford, carlessly.

She was beginning to be doubtful whether her course was as clear as she had anticipated; until one morning a letter arrived from Captain Stanfield, bringing an unexpected stroke of fortune in her favor.

Captain Stanfield was returning to Linthorp in the course of a month or so—"for there is no place like the seaside for me," he wrote. "I'm going to the Crawfords on my way back, if you have any commands there. I have found a sort of new relation at Broadmead—a little god-daughter, whom I have every reason to believe has a fair prospect of being very happily married there: that is, if my eyes and ears—and perhaps a little more—do not deceive me."

"Who can this little god-daughter be?" asked Lady Pechford, as she read the passage to John Carteret.

John Carteret went a little paler than usual, but Lady Pechford appeared to be looking another way.

"I am so glad that Captain Stanfield is returning to Linthorp," she went on, without seeming to observe that she had received no reply to her question. "Such a dear, charming, honest sort of person, and such an acute observer. I was quite astonished at his insight into Linthorp affairs, and quite alarmed at the judgment he might pronounce upon us all."

And she continued to converse upon indifferent topics, apparently losing sight of the letter and Captain Stanfield's god-daughter altogether. But she nevertheless was well assured that the shaft had flown as she had intended; and John Carteret went home with another argument on the side of his doubts and fears.

Not that he believed that Diana was at all aware whither her heart was straying. He knew that she still thought herself true to him. But he doubted whether some day she might not awake, and find that her love had been given too easily, too lightly; and that, with the growth of years, another and a deeper love had sprung to life.

"There must be something in it," mused Lady Pechford. "Doubtless the girl's a flirt, and the sooner John Carteret learns it the better."

Lady Pechford was no worse than her neighbors; but when a woman dips into diplomacy, she contrives to entangle simple affairs in as hopeless an inextricability as the most distinguished diplomatists can possibly manage to entangle greater ones.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE WHISPER REACHES BROADMEAD.

Broadmead was bearing her spring crown royally. March was nearly at an end; and the winds had blown over the land, and were still blowing freshly, as though they would let nothing rest, but were summoning every blade and bud to life and activity; and the heavens looked brighter, as well they might, since the restless winds had driven the heavy snow-clouds northward, where they might stay packed up on the tops of the ice-mountains until the cold season came round again, and the earth wanted her ermine mantle to throw over her shivering form, and to protect the shrubs and plants that crept under its wide folds.

Almost a month since Charles Stanfield had been at Broadmead, and had spoken such unexpected words to Diana. It seemed longer to her—for she had brooded over the visit, and reproached herself for having given pain to one she esteemed so highly. She had tried to keep his secret; but, somehow, Jasper had contrived to know it. Whether she had told him, or he had guessed it, she was not quite sure; but it came to pass that he knew it, as he knew everything concerning her.

Yet he had not calculated upon such a catastrophe as this; and he was filled with

alarm as to what might have transpired in her reply. Naturally, she might have told Mr. Stanfield of her engagement; and, if so, it would entirely refute Captain Stanfield's story, and perhaps lead to an explanation which would place matters upon a much more secure footing than they were at present between Diana and John Carteret.

Besides this, an open acknowledgment of her engagement, which might possibly slip out through Charles Stanfield to the Crawfords, would render utterly useless all the insinuations and suggestions that Mrs. Seaton had of late propagated in Broadmead. For Jasper was not unaware of these, nor was he unaware of the construction that might be put upon the relationship in which he appeared to Diana.

As long as John Carteret was lost sight of, popular opinion would take the phase he wished it to take; and, with patient working, things in time might take the turn he wished them to take. For this he strove—for this he set his whole energies to work. He took advantage of every circumstance, however slight, that he could bend to his own purpose. He was withheld by no principle; he wavered not in his determination; his will was inflexible;—and yet he had a curious conscientiousness that prevented his taking any active step. It must be the work of others—forced, as it were, upon him; and bearing him up, without any effort of his own, upon a tide of misapprehension that it was not his business to correct.

He knew, as well as he knew his own heart, that John Carteret was true to Diana, and he never actually said to the contrary; yet the whole unspoken action of his present life was to prove John Carteret false. And Diana, unused to diplomacy, whilst she saw the hatred that Mrs. Seaton bore to John Carteret and estimated her words accordingly, was blind to the subtler antagonism of her son.

Jasper Seaton was somewhat at a loss to discover the especial point he wished to know. He could ask no questions, neither could he refer to the subject; so he was obliged to continue in a state of suspense, each day expecting some further development that might more entirely counteract his plans. He was in a continual mental fever, nervous and restless; and Mrs. Seaton began to fear that Jasper's health was failing, even as Anne's had done. She wondered whether his accident had anything to do with it—for he had never seemed to recover his strength entirely.

"I wish Jasper had more color. How pale he is," she said to Diana.

"Is he paler than usual?" answered Diana. "I had not noticed it."

But when awakened by Mrs. Seaton's remark to perceive that there was a change in Jasper—that he looked tired and worn, and also that he was falling into some of his old irritable manner—she was disposed to think that the accident had been more serious than they had supposed; therefore, when Mrs. Seaton suggested a change, Diana found herself advocating it, and urging upon Jasper to think of himself, and take some care of his health.

"The seaside!" said Mrs. Seaton.

Diana's heart gave a leap. Why not Linthorp.

Perhaps Jasper understood the sudden brightness that came into her face; for he said, with almost a shudder—

"Too cold, too cold. No, I am better where I am."

"We might go south," said Mrs. Seaton.

And Diana's little flash of hope died out within her. Yet, after all, what did it matter? She should scarcely be farther off from John Carteret than she was now, and it might be good for Jasper. And she wondered if she were growing selfish. Yet it was a long time since she had seen John Carteret. She had called several times at Brierly House—ostensibly, to bring some message from Mrs. Seaton, or to make some especial inquiry as to the best method of helping some of the poor people; but, in reality, in the hope of hearing a stray word of Linthorp news that might interest her. In this, however, she had been disappointed; for Miss Pyecroft—in the solemnity and importance she felt at having become impromptu the *confidante* of Lady Peckford—had sealed her lips and withheld her pen upon the subject of John Carteret. Therefore, though Diana heard of the meeting at Comminster and of Dr. Fennitherne, of Lady Peckford, and of the visitors who happened to be at Linthorp, she did not even hear St. Botolph's or Mr. Wardlaw alluded to, nor any mention of John Carteret. Miss Pyecroft was keeping everything to herself, until she could burst forth in the full glory of full and complete information.

But one afternoon, not long afterwards, Diana was listlessly strolling through the village alone. She had been expecting a letter from Linthorp, but it had not come, and she felt anxious and unhappy, and so had determined to go down to the Neris. She always felt happier after a talk with the Signora; and to-day she felt particularly in want of consolation—a heavy cloud seemed to hang over her, and some unseen weight to press her down; whilst she had a sort of dim foreboding that everything hopeful was being swept away.

So she wandered on; and as she drew near the Neris' cottage, she saw Miss Letty Pyecroft coming along with an open letter in her hand. She had just met the postman, and had taken it from him, and was hastily reading it as she walked onwards. When she reached Diana, she stopped.

"Oh, Di! I've just got a letter from Rebecca. You will like to hear it—for it seems to be all about Mr. Carteret."

The bright look came back, and in an instant her weary face was transformed into an eager listening one—anxiously waiting for Miss Letty's next words.

"There's wonderful news about Mr. Carteret, Di. And yet it isn't so wonderful—for it's just what Captain Stanfield told us. It seems that the incumbent of St. Botolph's is quite as rich as people said, and that his daughter is very handsome. But I'll read it out of the letter if you like, Di. You and Mr. Carteret used to be such good friends, that I know you will be glad to hear."

Diana turned sick at heart. She scarcely seemed to hear what Miss Letty was saying. She should understand it better if she read it herself.

"Will you let me look at the letter, Miss Letty?" she said, involuntarily.

Miss Letty hesitated, for just then her eye fell upon a passage that she had not noticed before—"Don't mention this in Broadmead at present."

"Dear me, what have I done?" she said, in alarm. "Rebecca says it isn't to be mentioned, and here have I been telling you all about it. What shall I do? But you won't tell any one—will you, Di? Rebecca would be so annoyed! Dear me? Dear me!"

And Miss Letty was so taken up with her own fears, that she did not perceive the white face over which Diana hastily drew her veil.

"No, Miss Letty," she managed to say. "I won't tell any one—I will promise you, quite, quite faithfully. But does Miss Pyecroft say that Mr. Carteret is going to be married?"

And it seemed to her that she was speaking in a dream; and that, at the sound of her own voice, she should awake, and find it one.

"Well, no—she does not exactly say that," answered Miss Letty. "And I suppose that is the reason that she does not want it talked about at present. But she says there's no doubt of its coming to pass in the end—from all she can hear and see. And of course, for a young man without prospects, it is a most excellent thing."

"Yes," said Diana, dreamily.

"I suppose we shall hear all about it when Rebecca comes home. I dare say it will be all settled by then; and then you will know about it, as well as every one else. And I shouldn't be surprised if he were to ask you to be a bridesmaid."

Diana started.

"Oh, no—I think not."

"Well, perhaps you would hardly be an old enough friend. And yet, you know him so well when he was here. I almost wonder he did not write to tell you about it; but perhaps he will when it's all settled."

"I don't know—"

And even Miss Letty, obtuse as she was, noticed a little constraint in Diana's manner; and the old theory of John Carteret's rejection sprang up in her mind, and she thought it might be wiser to say no more about it; so she turned the subject.

"You should get rid of that cold of yours, Di. You're terribly hoarse to-day."

"Am I?"

"Dreadfully, just like a raven. I'll send you some of Rebecca's cough syrup—it cures every one."

"No, don't!" said Diana, feeling as though she must flee from her companion, or else betray herself. However, she managed, with a great effort, to walk on, and to speak a few more incoherent sentences; and then, to her intense relief, Miss Letty said she must turn down the Mill-pool lane, as she wanted to see a sick woman at one of the cottages there.

"And you'll be quite sure not to say a word to a single soul?" said Miss Letty, turning back for a moment.

"Quite certain," said Diana.

"Not even to Sophy, if you should see her—she would be almost as much vexed as Rebecca would be."

"No—I will not tell any one."

"That's a dear creature. I know I can trust you. Not by word, or deed, or look—remember!"

And she went away, nodding and smiling.

For the next few minutes Diana was so utterly bewildered that she knew not where she was, nor what path she was taking; until she suddenly, as it seemed to her, awaked, and found herself in the pine wood, among the great tall stems; and she sat down upon a thick bed of moss, near a broken stump, and tried to recall her thoughts.

Had Miss Letty really been telling her about John Carteret, or had there been some mistake?

And looking through the arching trees, her eyes fell on the tender spikes of green, which soon would be quivering with waves of blue. How well she remembered pointing out the hyacinth glory to John Carteret not a year ago, and exactly how she had felt, and what she was thinking of; and now—

"It is not true, it is not true!" she almost shrieked. "I will not believe it, except from John Carteret himself."

Then the sound of the water slipping over the stones caught her ear. Trickle, trickle,—like a mocking spirit, chattering something unintelligible. And then again she thought—as she had thought before—of Undine, and half wondered how it was that people cared to be immortal. If one had no soul, one could lie down, and be at rest. Could perfect rest come without forgetfulness? And suddenly the words came to her heart, as though a voice had spoken them—"O, that I had the wings of a dove, that I might flee away, and be at rest!"

Upward!—the dove flies upward!

Whither?

"It is not true, it is not true!" she said again, as if strengthening herself against the words she had seen in Miss Pyecroft's own handwriting. Yet Miss Pyecroft was a truthful person.

What should she do?

Wait, wait! What else is there for man to do but wait? It is all waiting upon the earth; waiting for flight—waiting till the soul's wings are no more clogged by earth.

She dipped her hand in the stream, and bathed her fevered forehead and her parched lips; and then she smoothed her hair; and, after sitting for awhile, rose up, and thought she would go home.

She could not go to the Neris now. There would be danger of betraying Miss Letty if she did so, for the Signora always knew if anything had gone wrong; and, indeed, Diana generally told her, so that she could scarcely hide this from her. No—she would not go to the Neris; she would go home and practice the new symphony she was learning for Signor Neri. Then she need not talk to any one; and the music, perhaps, might have some soothing revelation for her—at any rate, it would prevent her having to talk to any one. For the rest, she must wait until she should hear from John Carteret again; and until then, she would believe that all that Miss Pyecroft had said was false—that some singular delusion had taken possession of her, and that her next letter would contradict it all.

She sprang up—she tried to shake off her fear—she tried to be brave, to disbelieve, to be full of hope and confidence. But trying does not bear up the wings of hope; and when it comes to making an effort to command them, confidence and trust are not easy to retain.

And Diana repeating over and over again, "It is not true!" went her way homewards.

(TO BE CONTINUED.

WORKERS drop and die—the work continues.
God names differently what we name "failing,"
In a glory-mist His purpose veiling—
One by one He moves on us hands anointed
By His hands, to do our task appointed.
But the dimness of our fleshly prison
Hides the total splendor of the vision.

Grant us, Lord, behind that veil to feel Thee,
In our humble life-work to reveal Thee;
Doing what we can do, and believing
One, with Thee, are giving and receiving.

IS IT SLANDER?

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

"Ah! Mr. Frivolous," called out an elderly dame from her aerie in the second story, from whence, peeping through the blinds, she kept strict watch upon her neighbor's affairs, "you'll not get them girls to talk to you much, for I told 'em you was a married man."

Mr. Frivolous, who had been trying for some time to engage the attention of a couple of young ladies, with a conspicuous want of success, answered, showing a good deal of chagrin—

"You shouldn't slander me that way, Mrs. Owl-eye; and the looks of the man, more than his words, implied that he had been "badly told on."

"Slander," says Webster, "is a false tale maliciously uttered, *and intending to injure the reputation of another.*"

Now taking up the latter clause of Webster's definition, let me ask in all seriousness, "Is it injurious to a man's reputation to be regarded as a married man? And if so, is it alike disgraceful to a woman to stand confessed a married woman?" One would think it was, judging by the conduct of some, of both sexes, who belong to that class.

Dear reader, please take a squint through my spy-glass, and I will show you more things, belike, "Than are dreamt of in your philosophy." You have heard the remonstrance that Mr. Frivolous sent up to Mrs. Owl-eye's aerie; and now I will give you a view of the same gentleman away from home, with no owl, among his acquaintance, ready to pounce upon him unawares.

He is, probably, an Insurance or Sewing-machine Agent, or something of that sort; and of course, since his business takes him among strangers, and especially among the ladies, it is highly necessary that he should be faultlessly attired—to give prestige to his business, you know—and although his wife has to practice the most rigid economy, in order to make a decent appearance away from home, when, by dint of careful management, she secures a half holiday; yet, this gentleman appears every day dressed like a nabob: other agents have quite as good success in much plainer clothing; but then he does not choose to see that.

His boyish conduct and genteel clothes lead strangers to set him down at once, as a bachelor—for alas! your *genuine* married man is too apt to be neither jolly or genteel—and humoring the deception, he "pitches in" and has a good time with the girls. To do this, he must, of course, virtually repudiate his wife, and conceal his marriage as carefully as he would a theft, or any other dishonorable fact.

Ah, Mr. Frivolous! I imagine your marriage *is* a disgrace; but not to you.

And now, on the other hand, I will present you with a view of Mistress Flirt. She is indeed a gay lady. You may meet her any day on your public promenade, dressed in the height of fashion, and looking as youthful as possible. Sometimes her little daughter makes one of the party; and dressed like a doll, plays no inconsiderable part in the *show* so kindly made gratuitous to the public: in such a case, the child is often instructed, beforehand, to call her own mother "aunty," or anything on earth, rather than the sweet, endearing name, "mamma." Now my dear, matronly readers, who so love to hear that blessed title pronounced in the innocent prattle of your darlings, you may well open your eyes wide in astonishment, but pray do not accuse me of romancing, for, *I know whereof I speak*, and it is alas! a lamentable fact that such sacrilegious idiots encumber almost every community; and we can only hope that they are in a hopeless minority even among the fashionable mothers. God bless the noble woman, who is prouder of husband and baby than all earthly grandeur!

Mrs. Flirt goes to balls, and while her husband, who is generally older or more sensible than herself, hides himself in some obscure corner, or else stays at home, leaving his wife to the more delightful guardianship of some Beau Tibbs of society, she dances the hours away, and—"makes conquests." Blush! blush! oh, American wifehood! if you know the meaning of that term as applied to a wife in all the length and breadth of its significance *to the beaux*. There is not a pure and honored wife in all this land who would covet the reputation of making a conquest if she *knew* all the hopes such a fact implies to the subject of conquest and his kind.

Now, friends, you have seen a picture of each of these "disgraced beings;" shall we condemn them on this circumstantial evidence? Let us hear the defence.

Two young persons, who have been the life of every gathering, are married. Have the mystic words that made them one changed their natures also? Methinks not; and verily it seems that it might be hard for such persons to drop suddenly to the position of wall-flowers without a regret or a struggle. But the state of society, as a general rule in this country, makes such a process inevitable to the married people who act with perfect consistency according to the dignity of their position. I read something like the following in the newspapers about the time that the Prince of Wales had returned from his visit among us. Queried the Queen mother, "What kind of society do they have over in America?" "Pooh!" replied the Prince, "I saw none, save a few boys and girls at a party."

There it is in a nutshell. If you want to move in American society, at large, you must play "boys and girls" to some extent at least; and alas! there are found many so weak as to mistake the paste for the diamond, and barter off real happiness for its seeming.

Let us then not too rashly condemn Mr. Frivolous and Mrs. Flirt; for I strongly suspect that when the time comes which will give to a pleasant, genteel married gentleman and his beautiful wife the same chance for enjoyment that the boys and girls of the age possess, they will no longer deem it a slander to receive their proper title.

MOUSE IN-THE-CORNER.

☞ SO LIKE.—Last week there was a report that at Newport a French count had eloped with the wife of a New York gentleman. The news went to New York, and in twenty-four hours it is said that over a hundred desperate individuals came on suddenly to see their wives at that fashionable watering-place.

☞ In fulfillment of a vow to be performed if her husband returned in safety from a whaling voyage, a New Bedford woman has travelled through the streets on her knees. You see she was on-knees-y about him.

Revengeful Punishments.

We once knew of a little child who had stolen a couple of figs off the dessert dish on the day of a dinner party. The theft was discovered, and her father made her wear the figs on a string round her neck the whole evening, with full explanations why. We heard the story when the child had grown up to be a woman, and from her own lips; and she said that to this hour she suffered from the shame of that evening; it was burnt into her, and made a wound ineffaceable for life. It was a tremendous punishment for the fault: the fault itself being in so young a child as she was—five years old only—one that might have been punished and reformed by milder measures. It seems to have been a mistake, judging from the bitterness with which the father's character was spoken of—she said she had ceased to love him from that day—and from the stern and loveless nature of the woman herself it seemed to have cast out all softness from her. And though, to be sure, she stole no more figs, yet she had learned her lesson of keeping her fingers from wandering into the region of forbidden dainties at too severe cost. The policy of humiliation is a dangerous one at all times and on all occasions, and far more souls have been crushed by this than sins have been confirmed by over-leniency. To destroy all self-respect is to destroy all healing power, and to prevent all possibility of a rebound. In dealing with the faulty, however hard we may be on the sin, we ought always to reserve a way of restoration to the sinner.

FAR AND NEAR.

☞ Midnight croquet parties are the latest fashionable amusements in England. Good for the doctors.

☞ Queen of spades—a gardener's wife.

☞ 1,574 registered letters were stolen last year.

☞ The poet Tennyson is again Idyling away his time.

☞ Sophie Sparkle says that Saratoga is renowned for its curious collection of old bachelors.

☞ The celebrated hanging tower of Pisa, Italy, threatens to fall over entirely.

☞ Many people are wondering if 1871 is to be a great grape year. An exchange answers the query by saying that it is not likely to be, because this is the "current year."

☞ There are many tales about a snake with two heads in Virginia.

☞ A Philadelphia tough case is said to "swear like an alligator."

☞ One of the beaux at Saratoga is described by a lady correspondent as being a "pale, melancholy-looking youth, addicted to writing verses, and also perfectly versed in the art of making compliments."

☞ A visitor to an English mad-house was taken for a lunatic and locked up.

☞ New York nurses run races on the sidewalks with their baby carriages.

☞ The Yankee who was "lying at the point of death," whittled it off with his jack-knife, and is now recovering.

☞ A Georgia game of base ball broke up in the eighth inning with one arm broken, one eye put out, one jaw dislocated, and eighteen fingers "shifted."

☞ Mrs. Petroleum Shoddy, riding past the bust of Humboldt in the Park, exclaimed with disgust: "How could they let that patent-medicine man put his statue in this public place!"

☞ When a man "puts up" at a Chicago hotel, he sees in the papers the next morning that he has "reined in his roaming valise at the Tremont."

☞ Matchless Misery—A segar with nothing to light it.

☞ Rejected lays—Bad eggs.

☞ A reason which a philanthropist gives for "sparing the noble red man," is that we should lose the pleasantest part of our years, if we hadn't the "Indian some'ers" (summers.)

☞ There is a sign on Nassau street, New York, which in the most enticing manner invites passers by to enter and partake of "Rise Puden."

☞ "Don't a Quaker ever take off his hat to any one, mamma?" "No, my dear." "If he don't take off his hat to a barber, how does he ever get his hair cut?"

☞ The editor of an Eastern paper, having received a bank-note detector, returns thanks, and modestly asks for some bank-notes upon which to test its accuracy.

☞ "What flower of beauty shall I marry?" asked a young spendthrift of his miserly governor. To which the governor replied with a grim smile, "Marigold."

☞ How on earth is it that, at a party, the guests grow thin after supper?

☞ Rhode Islanders are greatly in favor of the narrow-gauge railroad, because, says an exchange, a broad guage is apt to run through little Rhody with one rail over the border.

☞ Frederick the Great kept an aid-de-camp to wear his shoes till he could put them on, but he sometimes wore them too long, and got a kicking for his pains.

☞ In Pekin a newspaper of extraordinary size is published weekly on silk. It is said to have been started more than a thousand years ago.

☞ A telegraph connects Mammoth Cave, Ky., with the outer world.

☞ A learned man has said that the three hardest words to pronounce in the English language are, "I was mistaken."

☞ Illinois chickens scratched up a gold watch that was lost seventeen years ago.

☞ A late N. Y. Tribune says:—"It seems to us one of the most remarkable features of the time that so many men and women should write passable poetry, fair enough, in a day of less glut, to make a reputation. Considering the quantity, one is surprised to find the quality so clever. Every newspaper conductor receives from young people ambitious of print, packs of poetry which seems too good for the waste-basket, but which is not worth the room which it would occupy in an overcrowded journal. There is nothing for it but to say 'No!' much pain as the veto may give—there would be an avalanche of these metrical offerings otherwise."

☞ The word "heart" is named eight hundred times in the Bible; the word "soul" four hundred and forty times; and the word "head" only eighty-three times.

☞ Some young men are a little partial to blue-eyed maidens. Others like dark-eyed lasses. But the mon-eyed girls have the most admirers.

☞ Those ladies who have a passion for tea parties should remember that tattle begins with T.

☞ A young man in Portland, Me., cut off two of his toes that he might wear a small boot. He finds that he has put his foot in it.

☞ Rolling stock—Cattle on railways.

☞ In France a woman has no remedy when a man promises to marry her and doesn't. At first sight this may seem a little cruel; but practically it has the effect of doing away with what are called engagements, now there being no engagement there is no breach. A man and woman meaning to be married, marry at once, and there's an end to diplomacy.

THE MARKETS.

FLOUR—12,000 bbls sold at $4.50@5.00 for superfine; $4.75@5.50 for extra; $5.50@6.25 for Penna extra family; $6.00@7.25 for Northwest family; $6.50@7.50 for Penna and Western family, and $7.50@9 ₱ bbl for fancy brands. Rye Flour sold at $4@4.25 ₱ bbl.

GRAIN—Wheat—30,000 bus sold at $1.39@1.45 for Western red; $1.38@1.45 for Delaware red; $1.47@1.48 for Penna red; $1.45@1.52 for Western amber, and $1.55@1.65 for white. Rye—Sales of 4500 bus at 77@80c ₱ bus. Corn—Sales of 65,000 bus at 69@72c for Western mixed, and 70@73c for yellow. Oats—Sales of 103,000 bus at 46@50c for mixed, and 47@51c ₱ bus for white.

PROVISIONS—Sales of mess Pork at $14@14.25 ₱ bbl. City packed extra Mess Beef sells at $17@17.50 ₱ bbl. Beef Hams, $25@27. Bacon—Sales of sugar cured city smoked hams at 14@16c; sides at 8½@9½c, and shoulders at 7@7½c. Green Meats—Sales of pickled hams at 11@12c; and shoulders, in salt, at 6@6½c. Lard—Sales at 9½@9½c for city and Western steam and kettle rendered. Cheese—Sales of New York factory at 9@10½c. Butter—Sales of roll 18@26c, and packed at 12@14c. Eggs sell at 26@30c; Western at 25@27c ₱ dozen.

COTTON—Sales of 800 bales at 20@20¾c for middling upland, and 20¾@21½c for New Orleans.

BARK—No 1 Quercitron is quoted at $25 ₱ ton. Tanners' Bark at $11@12 ₱ cord for chestnut.

BEESWAX sells at 25@35c ₱ ℔ for Yellow.

FRUIT—Dried Apples sell at 5½@7¼c. Green Peaches sell at $1@2 ₱ basket, and Green Apples at $3@5 ₱ bbl.

HAY—Prime Timothy Hay, ₱ 100 lbs, $1,35@1,35; mixed do, $1,10@1,15; Straw, 90@$1,15.

HOPS—Sales of Prime at 20@25c.

IRON—Pig Iron—Sales of 800 tons No 1 Foundry at $37, and No 2 at $35 ₱ ton. Bar Iron sells at $77@80. Scotch Pig commands $35 ₱ ton.

SEEDS—Cloverseed at 10@10½c; 1500 bus Timothy seed sold at $3,50; Flaxseed sells at $1,90.

PHILADELPHIA CATTLE MARKET.

The supply of Beef Cattle during the past week amounted to about 2900 head. The prices realized from 7@7¼ cents ₱ ℔. 250 Cows brought from $35 to $70 ₱ head. Sheep—10,000 head were disposed of at from 5@6c ₱ ℔. 3000 Hogs sold at from $6,50 to $7,25 ₱ 100 ℔s.

R. R. R.

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Cures the worst pains in from one to twenty minutes. Not one hour after reading this advertisement need any one suffer with pain. **Radway's Ready Relief** is a cure for every pain. It was the first and is the only pain remedy that instantly stops the most excruciating Pains, allays Inflammations, and cures Congestions, whether of the Lungs, Stomach, Bowels, or other glands or organs, by one application, in from one to twenty minutes, no matter how violent or excruciating the pain, the Rheumatic, Bed-ridden, Infirm, Crippled, Nervous, Neuralgic, or prostrated with disease, may suffer. Price 50 cents.

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PERFECT PURGATIVE PILLS.

Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated, for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Headache, Constipation, Costiveness, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Bilious Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all Derangements of the Internal Viscera. Warranted to effect a Positive Cure.

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Exuberant Health

Is a blessing vouchsafed to few. Even those who have been favored by nature with strong constitutions and vigorous frames are apt to neglect the precautions necessary to preserve these precious endowments. Indeed, as a rule, the more healthy and robust a man is, the more liberties he is inclined to take with his own physique. It is some consolation to the naturally weak and feeble to know that they can be so invigorated and built up, by a proper use of the means which science has placed at their disposal, as to have a much better chance of long life and exemptions from disease and pain, than the most athletic of their fellows who are foolish enough to suppose themselves invulnerable, and act accordingly.

It is not too much to say that more than half the people of the civilized world need an occasional tonic, to enable them to support the strain upon their bodies and minds, which the fast life of this restless age occasions. In fact, a pure, wholesome, unexciting tonic is the grand desideration of the busy millions, and they have the article in HOSTETTER'S STOMACH BITTERS. It is a staminal medicine, i. e. it imparts permanent strength to weak systems and invigorates delicate constitutions. Its reputation and its sales have steadily increased. Competitive preparations have been introduced *ad libitum*, and, as far as the public is concerned, *ad nauseam*, in the hope of rivalling it; but they have all either perished in the attempt or been left far in the rear. It has been the great medical success of the present century, and it is quite certain that no proprietary medicine in this country is as widely known, or as generally used.

Ten lightning presses, running incessantly (Sundays excepted,) the whole year through, barely supply the demand for the Illustrated Almanac, in which the nature and uses of the preparation are set forth, the circulation now being over eight millions a year.
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Sweet Sixteen.—If you wish to look young, as well as beautiful, use HAGAN'S MAGNOLIA BALM upon your face, neck and hands, and LYON'S CELEBRATED KATHAIRON upon your hair. The Balm makes your complexion natural, transparent and lively. It removes Freckles, Pimples, Moth-patches, &c., and instead of a red rustic face, you have the marble purity of a city belle. It gives to middle age the bloom of youth. Add to this a luxuriant head of hair, produced by Lyon's Kathairon, and a lady has done her happiest thing in the way of adornment. It is the best Dressing in the world, and prevents the hair from falling out and turning gray. Sold by all Druggists.
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Interesting to Ladies.

This will certify that we have used in our family the Grover & Baker Sewing Machine for the last *twelve years*. It has never had any repairs up to this time, and has done good work. We consider it decidedly the best sewing machine for family use in the market.

A. M. WAGAB,
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"**Whitcomb's Remedy for Asthma** entirely relieved me."—*W. Balduin, Urbana, Ohio.*

UNWEDDED.

BY FLORENCE PERCY.

Oh, thou beloved, who shouldst have been
mine own,
Serenely beautiful and wise and strong,
Concoler whom my life has never known,
How have I missed thee, seeking thee alone
All my life long?

Somewhere upon the wide and misty track,
I strayed behind, or did not wait for thee;
And so must always mourn my bitter lack,
For on this weary road we go not back.
Ah, woe is me!

Often, with sorely burdened heart and mind
When there were none to aid or understand,
How I have groped with tears, alone and
blind,
In the thick darkness, longing but to find
Thy helpful hand!

For I believed that Love is doubly armed
Against all woes, and with unshaken
breath
Could pass through pain and suffering unalarmed;
Could take up poisonous things and not be
harmed,
And dare even death.

"And how shall Love, immortal and sublime,"
I said "be hindered of its best estate
By any petty chance of space or time?"
Alas! my life has lost its freshest prime,
And still I wait.

How beautiful our mingled lives had been,
Had we but found each other in our youth!
The world had grown, despite its stain and
sin,
Sweeter because we two had lived therein
Our utter truth.

Then all the myriad ills which Fate contrives
Wherewith to fret men's hearts, to us had
been
But motes along the sunshine of our lives;
Naught could have harmed us, since the true
soul thrives
By discipline.

Then this unending toil and ceaseless toss
Had never marred my life; the hindering
load
Of worldly circumstance, of gain or loss,
Had seemed to us but cobwebs, stretched
across
Our upward road.

Where art thou, love? Far as the farthest
pole,
Hast thou, too, vaguely dreamed of what
should be?
Or, mated early with some feebler soul,
Hast struggled with thy bonds in grief and
dole,
Longing for me?

I had been more than all the world to thee,
So proudly tender, so entirely true,
So wise and tireless in my ministry,
More dear than any other soul could be,
All my life through.

Alas! the sun's last glimmering has kissed
The highest mountain-tops to gold; and
now
The crimson west has changed to amethyst,
And all the vale is dim with chilly mist,
But where art thou?

Too late! too late! the darkness gathereth,
And the night falleth, pitiless and dumb;
I cannot reach thee with this hopeless breath;
But when I walk the other side of death,
Wilt thou not come?

PRACTICAL NOTES
FOR
FUTURE CALIFORNIA TOURISTS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

BY A LADY.

No. 6.

The Petrified Trees.—The Geysers.

When arranging our trip to the Geysers, we decided to go by way of Calistogo, and were advised by our friends to return by the old road known as the "hog's back," to Hillsburg, though Mr. Foss, who appeared to be the Major-General of the road, might object to our doing so. Feeling quite sure we could control our course, the going tickets were purchased by the Calistogo route, and at eight o'clock, A. M., we took a first-class steamboat, and had a fine sail up the bay to Vallejo, where we met the cars which were to carry us to Calistogo.

Our ride took us through the Napa Valley, which is under fine cultivation, and at one o'clock we reached our point of destination for the night. At this place there is a moderately good hotel, with several cottages scattered about to accommodate guests. There are also hot mineral springs, and bath houses. With proper attention this might prove a very pleasant summer resort for those who seek a change, and I found there were many who did. I met with those who said they really felt the need of being heated sufficiently to create some moisture in the skin—for in San Francisco one never could perspire unless through severe exercise. It was a new experience for me, to find ladies and children in search of warm weather the last of June.

Soon after our arrival at Calistogo, we heard the remark "here comes Foss;" and, following others, stepped forward and saw an open stage, drawn by six horses, rapidly coming up the avenue, whirled around a circle, and brought up to the door with as much ease as though it were one horse. The driver sat indifferently calm, as though it were a small matter to do, and the passengers alighted.

The driver was the great Foss, noted for his skill, and who we were told might not approve of our plans, but whose power I did not fully appreciate. I was presented to him after dinner, and it was arranged that I was to sit by his side the next morning, that being the seat of honor when "en route" for the Geysers.

During the afternoon we took a four-horse open carriage, and made a visit to the petrified forest—a distance of five miles from Calistogo. It was a mountain ride through a forest, up to the head of Napa Valley, where we entered into an open space, and saw a little cabin standing alone, sheltered by brave old trees, and a mountain soaring above. From it soon appeared a strong, sunburnt man, one looking as though he had passed many years in exposed places, who offered to guide us. He owns the property, and dwells here alone; no wife nor child, no companion; he and his dog share life together in this isolated spot. He is constantly discovering some new specimens of petrifaction, and is interested in showing them to strangers. This spot is well worthy of a visit; here are most wonderful specimens of trees that have evidently petrified while standing, and then fallen, centuries ago, for there are formations of soil and rock covering portions of them, and they are being dug around so that you see their position. On some the bark still remains only partially petrified. There are no trees standing at the present time in any stage of petrifaction; a new growth entirely now forms the forest. The present owner has been offered a large sum for this property, but he purchased it for a home, and were it not that he feels he has no right to deprive the world of the sight of these wonderful relics, he would prefer that strangers should not visit the place.

A man who so loves solitude, must have his own heart's history, and I could but feel that Nature was strange, and often produced strange results in people's lives.

Our ride back to the hotel was all that heart could wish. The St. Helena mountain towering above, Napa valley lying at its base, trees and shrubs tinted with sunset light, and birds singing their evening songs. Poet would fail to convey in words, or artist with his brush, the beauty God so lavishly bestows on those who will open their hearts to His offerings. Driving up to the little cottage which was our home for the night, we alighted, feeling our afternoon had been well spent.

Awakened early the following morning by the singing of the birds, we were all ready for the anticipated drive with Foss. I mounted up by his side. The morning was bright and cool. At the first crack of the whip, the six mustangs bounded off like an arrow from a bow. Such a gay, exhilarating ride inspired one with new life. We made the first twelve miles in one hour and five minutes, and most of the distance was a gradual ascent. At this point a fresh supply of horses was procured, and then commenced the heavier grade. The entire road is in good order, and is owned by the proprietors of the stage line, who hold control of it to the exclusion of all other vehicles if they so wish. Foss is the known representative and principal proprietor, a fine lineman, having his horses under perfect control. When I would compliment him, after turning some short curve, he managing his six horses as one, he would reply, "Wait till you return and we descend this mountain, then you will see driving." Hoping to return the other way, I would make no reply, but waited my time to speak upon the subject as advised.

Upon reaching a place on the way which they call Pine Plain, it being an open space, we there change stages, Mr. Foss transfers us to the charge of another, he taking the return passengers, and drives them back to Calistogo. While waiting for the other stage, we being ahead of time, it was proposed that I should broach the subject of "Hog's Back." At once a cloud came over the face of our driver, and his manner changed to indignation when I said, "Mr. Foss, we do not wish to return this way, we want to see all we can, therefore we prefer the other route." He looked at me "real cross," as children say, and said, "Who put that in your head? You don't know what you are talking about. It is an awful road on stock, on people, on everything. You can't go. I can't send you." I replied by saying, "I thought I only had to express the wish to Mr. Foss, and he would see that tourists were accommodated. That others had gone over the road only the week before." His answer was, "Oh! you came across *them things*, did you?" I replied, "Yes, sir, and both ladies and gentlemen said it was a beautiful ride, that we ought not to fail to see it." An English gentleman standing near, the only witness to our conversation, as we stood apart from the others, said, "I purchased a ticket to return that way, with an express understanding to that effect. Why do you tell them so?' The only answer was, "I cannot send you."

It was no use to talk any longer, and the stage coming up, we parted, and taking another front seat, by the side of another driver, found there were others who handled four horses as well as he did six—for we went plunging down the mountain, turning curve after curve at a reckless rate, yet had no fear, for our driver proved his skill. At times we were on the brink of a precipice, again we looked down into the Russian river and Santa Rosa valley, and at last we halted in front of a nice, cosy-looking place, where a lady steps out to meet us, as they do in the old country on arriving at a hotel. It gives a pleasant welcome, to have one of your own sex thus meet you.

This place is the Geysers. It is a quiet, home-like spot. At once you feel that you would like to linger here and rest awhile, if time were not limited. The host is a German, and does all in his power to accommodate his guests. We enjoyed the comfort of his good, clean beds—a real luxury in travelling.

At five the next morning, we were awakened by a Chinaman that we might get a cup of coffee before visiting the Springs. The early morning is the best time for the view, there is more steam issuing from them. One must be provided with a good stout pair of boots and a bloomer dress, or quite a short walking dress that cannot be injured, for it is a damp walk over mineral rocks; hot steam issuing from them everywhere. Taking staff in hand you start for the Canon, which is a mysterious place—such outpouring of steam, and rumbling, hollow sounds. The guide pointed out the devil's office—a deep cavern under immense rocks; then his inkstand, a pool of black ink which one can write with, and is always used there for the purpose; then his pulpit, a projecting rock with steam foundation—in truth steam issues from every place; you seem to be walking upon rock, but upon running your staff into it you find it crumbles, and steam rushes out; and if you drop a heavy weight, the earth trembles and sounds hollow. At one spot the steam sounds like a steamboat, at another a whistle is constantly blown. The vapor is very nauseating to many, so strong does it smell of sulphur and other minerals. There is a diversity of opinions regarding the cause of all these results; and when scientific men disagree, it seems presumptious for me to offer suggestions. Many believe at some future time a great volcano will open—others that there will be a deep chasm formed—but to me it seems most rational that the water passing over a great variety of mineral substances, produces the same result that it would have if poured upon lime, slacking the earth, as it were, till the very mountains crumble, and sending forth column after column of steam. Upon inquiry we found we were not able to procure any other mode of conveyance from the Geysers than that the great Foss chose to provide, although fifty dollars was offered to one of his drivers to carry us over the route which we wished to return. But it so happened no stage came from Hillsburg, the point we desired to make, therefore we yielded to fate, and taking the same stage returned to Pine Plain, where we met the General commanding. To my surprise he asked me if I should like to sit up front. I said I should—my manner was not very genial, and I made no opening speech. After the first grand descent he asked, "Isn't that fine?" I then calmly opened the batteries of indignation and replied, "Yes, Mr. Foss, it is fine, and the day is beautiful, and you drive handsomely; but you know I did not wish to come this way. You had us in your power, you knew it, and we know it; but in disappointing me, you only disappoint one, whereas my experience may add pleasure to others, for I will tell everybody how to do. We were not posted. We ought to have refused to leave Calistogo till you had telegraphed the stage from Hillsburg to meet us, or have remained at the Geysers, if time allowed, till a stage brought passengers, then taken possession of it. We tourists come to see, and expect to pay for sight-seeing; we are not accustomed to be dictated to as to our choice of routes. We would rather take a rougher road, if the views are finer. You wish to bring the travel over this new road, that has cost you $30,000, but a railroad up the valley might give us more comfort, and your skillful driving be hidden forever, unless some should feel as I do, that I would prefer the mountain road." Mr. Foss and I gave free expression to our thoughts; but on reaching the end of the ride, I feel safe in saying I think he would gladly have paid for my passage over the old road; and I tell all you, my readers, to benefit by my experience, for those I have met since who took the journey, say it is a wonderful trip, and I feel that no parting gallantry that Mr. Foss seemed glad to offer, can ever wipe out the disappointment he caused me. No one likes to be forced to go a certain route, especially one of my sex; though I will accredit him with feeling great regret at not sending me, for surely it would have been much pleasanter in the results to him.

On our return to San Francisco, we again went to our old quarters at the Grand Hotel; and it was with a sort of home feeling we crossed the threshold of our room, which we left again in a few days for the Big Trees and the Yosemite Valley.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

IN THE DARK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

BY CLIO STANLEY.

Charlie Wetherell, the rich young widower, sat on the piazza of the Crofton House, lazily smoking his segar, and wishing he had something better to do.

By sheer persistency, his merry little sister-in-law had dragged him, as she forcibly expressed herself, to the mountains. It was true that he had halted at every little wayside station, trying, by means fair and unfair, to detain her from the journey's end; for he knew she was plotting to take him by surprise, and introduce him to some one out of her multitude of fair friends, in hope of inducing him to marry again.

At length, only two weeks before, they had arrived at the very top of the mountain, at the Crofton House, where the *air* was so invigorating, and the society so select.

Both of which assertions might be true; only he did not care a farthing for the truth or falsity of the latter.

Perhaps I ought to say *had* not cared; for he woke one morning and went out on his usual ramble to meet the beautiful Miss Larcom and her cousin—the blue-eyed Faith Darley—and he had not once wished himself at home since!

That afternoon, as he was wishing for some better company than his segar, he caught sight of those two young ladies coming up the walk; Miss Larcom, cool and self-possessed as usual, and Faith, brimming over with happy laughter, as her fair hands were running over with blossoms.

"You don't know how much you have lost, Mr. Wetherell," said Josie Larcom gayly, becoming suddenly exhilarated, as she saw who was watching them. "We have been into the woods, Faith and I, and have brought home our trophies!"

"The woods won't melt away over night?" he returned laughing.

"No, of course not," she said. But he detected, in Faith's expressive eyes, a recognition of his wish.

"Then why can't we go again? Have you ladies ever been in the woods at sunrise?"

Miss Larcom acknowledged that she had not, while Faith asked a little doubtfully,

"Have *you*, Mr. Wetherell?"

"You should not ask such an ungenerous question, Miss Darley," he replied; "but I see you can read faces."

Faith blushed, and then tried to hide her blushes in the beautiful bouquet she carried.

"Faith goes to the woods every morning, but I never can wake so early," said Miss Larcom.

"Suppose we try it to-morrow morning. Miss Darley can show us the way, I am sure. Her face will light the dark, if it is as bright then as it is now."

"Thank you," said Faith, disappearing with her fragrant burden, while her cousin waited to make the required promise, before she followed her upstairs.

"Faith, darling," she called, "where are you?" And then he heard her light steps dying away in the sunny silence.

"*Faith, darling*," he murmured to himself. "It *has* a sweet sound, but Miss Larcom's is such a sweet voice, it makes even common words musical! If I only knew—" he added thoughtfully. "I suppose my wise sister-in-law would say, 'Of course you are in love with Miss Larcom!'"

And lighting another segar, he leaned back in his chair, and surrendered himself to pleasant reveries.

* * * * * * *

It was early in the morning, the hour between the daylight and the dark, when Charlie Wetherell awoke to remember that he was going to the woods—and a pleasanter reflection—that two pretty women were to go with him.

"I don't know as I care much about the flowers," he said, half-laughing; "but if I can gather one sweet flower to blossom at my desolate fireside, I think next year may be a sunnier year than the last. It is a pity, though, that I am so thoroughly in the dark as to what *their* feelings are!"

And with a little sigh of regret for the days that were past, he left his room, going quietly down stairs and out on the piazza to wait the arrival of Miss Larcom and her cousin, pretty Faith Darley.

Without knowing it he had taken a chair directly against Miss Larcom's window; but the shutters were closed, and each was ignorant of the other's proximity until Charlie Wetherell was startled almost out of his self possession by the sound of a woman's voice.

"Come, Josie, don't you know we are bound for the woods again this morning? You must get up if you don't want to disappoint Mr. Wetherell."

"Bother Mr. Wetherell and his romantic notions," was the unexpected reply. "If he wasn't worth half a million I wouldn't trouble myself to get up at this time of day!"

"Oh, Josie, how can you speak in such a way? You surely esteem Mr. Wetherell for more than his money?"

"How earnest you are, my dear cousin! If you believed it would avail anything, I presume you would enter the lists to-morrow!"

"I will not stay and listen to you, Josephine! I shall wait for you on the piazza."

Fifteen minutes later, when Charlie Wetherell came down stairs the second time, he found both ladies waiting; Miss Larcom with her face wreathed in smiles, and Faith Darley, with a little frown on her fair brow, and a tender, wistful look on the red lips.

"Are you not well, Miss Darley?" asked our hero, going over to where she stood.

But it was Miss Larcom who answered him, in an even, sweet voice.

"Faith quarrelled with me because I was lazy and didn't want to get up; I assure you, Mr. Wetherell, flowers were no temptation to me this morning!"

"And you only came because you had compassion on my loneliness then?"

"Yes," she said softly, casting her blue eyes shyly down before his steady gaze.

If she had seen the look he bent on Faith a moment later, I do not think she would have thought it worth her while to go to the woods.

Two hours later they returned with hands full of flowers, and Mrs. Dick Wetherell, who met them at the door, threw her arms about Miss Larcom's slender waist, declaring aloud that she had never before seen her look so charming.

But there was another face more charming in her brother's eyes; other pale cheeks that grew rosy at his approach; and before the summer was ended that fair flower, Faith Darley, was transplanted to a home of her own, where she bloomed for her lover all the year through.

But she has never heard how near her husband once came to making a leap in the dark!

VERY SIMPLE.

BY ANNA C. BRACKETT.

How did I know that she loved me?
I opened the door,
And sunlight flushed from her o'er and
o'er;
Sudden it broke,
Before I spoke,
From forehead, and eyes, and trembling
lips,
From even the delicate finger-tips
That she laid in my hand so free.

How did I know that I loved her?
I opened the door,
And music throbbed through me o'er and
o'er;
Sudden it woke,
Before she spoke,
In head, and heart, and bewildered brain,
So sweet, so sweet, it was almost pain,
As I gave my hand to her.

About Smoking.

A curious investigator has gathered a great number of facts relative to smokers. Ben Johnson loved the "divine weed," and describes its every accident with the gusto of a connoisseur. Hobbes smoked after his early dinner pipes innumerable. Milton never went to bed without a pipe and a glass of water. Sir Isaac Newton was smoking in his garden at Woolsthorpe when the apple fell. Addison had a pipe in his mouth at all hours, at "Button's." Fielding both smoked and chewed. Shelley never smoked, nor Wordsworth, nor Keats. Coleridge, when cured of opium, took to snuff. Campbell loved a pipe. Sir Walter Scott smoked in his carriage, and regularly after dinner, loving both pipes and cigars. Byron wrote about "sublime tobacco," but was not an excessive smoker. Goethe did not smoke, nor did Shakspeare. Carlyle, now past 70, has been a sturdy smoker for years. Alfred Tennyson is a persistent smoker of some 40 years. Dickens, Jerrold and Thackeray all puffed. Lord Lytton loves a long pipe at night, and cigars by day. Lord Houghton smoked moderately. The late J. M. Kemble, author of "The Seasons in England," was a tremendous smoker. Moore cared not for it; indeed, Irish gentlemen smoked much less than English. Wellington shunned it; so did Peel. Disraeli loved the long pipe in his youth, but in his middle age pronounced it "the tomb of love." The same writer gives the following advice to smokers:

1. Never smoke when the pores are open. They absorb, and you are unfit for decent society. Be it your study ever to escape the no-ses of strangers. First impressions are sometimes permanent, and you may lose a useful acquaintance.

2. Learn to smoke slowly. Cultivate "calm and intermittent puffs."—WALTER SCOTT.

3. On the first symptoms of expectoration lay down the pipe or throw away the segar; long-continued expectoration is destructive to yourself and revolting to every spectator.

4. Let an interval elapse between the filling of succeeding pipes.

5. Clean your tube regularly, and your amber mouthpiece with a feather, dipped in spirits of lavender. Never suffer the conduit to remain discolored or stuffed.

6. A German receiver can be washed out like a tea-cup, and the oil collected is of value, but a meerschaum should never be wetted. A small sponge at the end of a wire dipped in sweet oil should be used carefully and persistently round and round, coaxing out any hard concretions, till the inside be smooth in its dark polished grain, or a rich mahogany tint. The outside also should be well polished with sweet oil and stale milk, then enveloped in chamois leather. The rich dark coloring is the pledge of your safety—better there than darkening your own brains.

☞ General Sherman is planning for a grand buffalo hunt for the Grand Duke Alexis and his suite.

IDA'S LOVERS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

"Oh, I loved in my youth a lady fair,
For her azure eyes and her golden hair."

High and clear, the sweet tenor voice rang out through the bracing, frosty air. It was an October morning; the woods were glorious in crimson and gold, the fields were white with frost, and the wind, cool and delicious, blew gently from the west, carrying health and strength to frames debilitated by summer's sultry heat.

"Who is that singing?" called Ida Miller, from the bows of a Chestnut tree, to her cousin Lou seated underneath, gathering up the bright nuts as they fell.

"I don't know; it's some fellow over in the next field. He's a good singer; hope he won't come along this way. Give that bough another shake, Ida," replied Lou.

Ida did so, and the nuts came down in a torrent. Deeply absorbed in gathering them into her basket, Lou Miller did not look up until her cousin called out again, in a half-frightened voice,

"Lou, as sure as you live, that fellow is coming directly towards us; he sees the limbs shaking, I suppose, and wants some chestnuts. He's a young man, in a brown suit, with a gun on his shoulder, and oh! so good-looking—"

"Hush, he'll hear you," said Lou. "Come down, quick, before he gets here."

"Not I," replied Ida. "I can't get down, without climbing all the way back along this slender branch. I'm going to hide in the leaves until he passes on."

"Oh, Ida, come down; he'll see you, anyhow, and a pretty figure you'll cut, perched up there like a squirrel; come down, quick," coaxed Lou.

"I won't, I tell you; I've got a secure resting-place, and I'm going to remain here."

Meanwhile the stranger approached and saluted Lou Miller with a graceful bow and a pleasant "good morning," which the lady returned as gracefully.

He was wonderfully good-looking; at least so thought little Ida Miller, surveying him from her airy out-look. A tall, erect form; brown hair, glossy and curling; frank, laughing blue eyes; and handsome lips, adorned by a drooping, light brown moustache. Surveying the branches overhead, his eyes caught the little figure of Ida hid among the leaves. Raising his rifle to his shoulder, he said, laughing,

"Is that lawful game, or do your laws in this state forbid the shooting of such rare and beautiful birds?"

Lou laughed.

"Our laws forbid it, certainly," she replied.

Poor Ida was covered with confusion when she found herself discovered; and in endeavoring to change her position, her feet slipped from the main branch, and she only saved herself from falling by grasping a slender branch with both hands. This bent with her weight, and she found herself swaying "between heaven and earth," but fortunately only a few feet from earth. The young man caught her in his arms, and deposited her safely on solid ground. Between fright and shame, the poor girl was speechless; she could only glance shyly at the stranger, while hot blushes dyed her face and neck.

The young man regarded Ida's rosy face with undisguised admiration. Never, he thought, had he seen any one half so lovely. Her short, curling hair, black as jet, hung in picturesque confusion over neck and forehead; her cheeks were red as June roses; while the great brown eyes above them were half filled with tears, and the scarlet lips beneath parted in a bewitching smile. Her small, but round and graceful figure, was clad in a coquettish walking-dress, revealing feet and ankles of exquisite mould and fairy-like proportions. Lou broke the embarrassing silence by bursting into a ringing laugh, in which the others joined heartily.

"You must not undertake climbing again, my girl, or you will be certain to break your neck," said Lou.

"But the chestnuts—I'd only got one branch shaken," replied Ida, ruefully.

"Well, we must let the squirrels have them, I suppose."

"By no means, ladies," said the stranger. "I am a good climber, and will gladly shake the tree for you, if you wish it."

"We would be much obliged to you, but the trouble would be too great."

"No trouble at all, I assure you," he said, taking off his coat; and in a moment he was gliding up the tree with the ease and agility of a squirrel. The bright nuts came rattling down like a shower of hail, and soon the ground was almost covered. To gather them up was a work of time, and I am afraid the young man did but little good in filling the basket, for he kept up such a continued conversation that they gave but little attention to the business on hand. And I think that little Ida almost lost her tender heart as she watched his handsome face, and listened to his pleasant, musical voice. The baskets were filled at last, however, and the young ladies were ready to go home.

"Can you tell me where Dr. Miller lives?" asked the young man, throwing his rifle on his shoulder, and taking a good long look at pretty Ida.

"I ought to be able to do so, as he is my father," laughed Lou.

"Your father? Then you are my cousin, Louise," said the stranger, in a pleased tone.

"My name is Louise; but I don't think you can be my cousin, as I never saw you before.

"Yes, you have, but you have forgotten me. I am Rafe Darrel—cousin Rafe, whom you used to play with when you were a very young lady, in short dresses. I have been in foreign countries for ten years, so of course you don't recognize me."

"But I do, now. Your eyes and smile are just the same. Oh, cousin Rafe, I am very glad to see you, after all these years," and they shook hands heartily.

"Is this your sister?" asked Rafe, looking at Ida, and holding out his hand.

"My cousin, Ida Miller, my father's niece, and therefore no real relation to you. I have no sister."

"I hope we shall be friends, Miss Ida, if we are not cousins," said Rafe, pressing her little hand, and smiling down on her blushing face.

"Of course you will go home with us, Rafe?" asked Lou, with cousinly familiarity.

"Yes. I ran down here from the city for a week's shooting, this beautiful weather, and I intend staying at your father's, if you will tolerate me."

"We will be glad enough to have you there. And we must be going, for it is nearly dinner time, and this bracing air gives one an appetite."

"It does indeed. I, at least, feel a strong desire to taste some of my aunt's excellent dishes."

Dr. Miller and his wife were greatly delighted to see their favorite but long absent nephew, and gave him a boisterous welcome. The doctor was a retired physician, living on an elegant farm not far from a large city. He was a jovial old man, disposed to take life easy. His daughter Louisa was his only child; but he loved his brother's orphan, little Ida, as much as he did his own child, and treated her the same in every respect.

The weather continuing clear, cool, and delicious, Rafe Darrel enjoyed some fine sport among squirrel and quail, which were exceedingly plentiful in wood and field; but in spite of these attractions, he spent a large portion of his time in the house, or in walking with the young ladies. I suspect that Ida's brown eyes and cherry cheeks influenced the handsome young man a good deal.

But the course of true love never does run smooth; and ere long he discovered that he had a rival, in the person of a stalwart young farmer named John Gordon, who walked into the parlor one evening, dressed in his best. Darrel saw at once, by his manner, that he was little Ida's "beau." The knowledge did not please him, and he retired to his room in a fit of the sulks.

"What the mischief can she see in that booby to like?" he said confidentially to his pillow. "But what difference does it make to me? Am I in love with this little country maiden? Yes, I am; and would marry her to-morrow, if she would have me. Aye, there's the rub—will she have me? I believe she would learn to love me, if that confounded fellow would keep out of the way. Certainly she doesn't love him, for he's ugly as sin. I guess I had better wait awhile, and see how matters go on; and if she isn't actually engaged to that fellow, I'll cut him out, by Jove! if I can."

With which consoling reflection he went to sleep.

Another week passed without Darrel having decided whether or not he could "cut out" the young farmer. Sometimes he teased Ida about him, but she speedily got into a bad humor, and vowed that she cared nothing at all for him—which Darrel, with his knowledge of women, could not believe.

One morning, being in a particularly down-hearted mood, he took his rifle and started for the woods to renew his acquaintance with the squirrels. He had not gone far ere he heard voices, which he recognized as belonging to Ida and her lover.

"All's fair in love and war," he said to himself; and approaching as near as he dared, he crouched behind a log, and peered through the foliage at the lovers—if such they were. They were seated on a fallen tree-trunk; Ida's face was averted, but Gordon's wore an expression of mingled anger and sorrow.

"You liked me well enough," he said, in a reproachful voice, "until that fellow from the city came down here. I suppose you think you'll get him now, and may-be you can; but it's my opinion you'll get no great prize, anyhow."

"You are no gentleman," retorted Ida, angrily, "to slander an absent person. I never expect to get Mr. Darrel; but that is no reason why I should marry you."

"I didn't mean to say anything against him; I don't know anything about him; but oh! Ida, he doesn't love you as I do! Only think how we played together as children, and how I have loved you ever since, caring nothing for any one else."

"I am sorry for you, John, if you love me as you say," replied Ida, gently. "But I can never care for you only as a friend, and it would be wrong to marry you."

"Y. u never can love me as I love you!"

"I never can, John."

"Then good-by," said the honest fellow, rising to his feet, and holding Ida's hands in his, while his mournful eyes, filled with tears, met hers. "I shall never trouble you any more. I am rough and ugly, I know, but I loved you truly. Will you let me kiss you once, for the first time and the last?"

"As a friend, you may, John," said Ida, pitying his sorrowful face.

"As the only woman I shall ever love!" he said passionately, catching her to his breast for a moment; then he released her, and disappeared without another word.

Darrel pitied the poor youth sincerely, but at the same time his heart beat high with the joy of renewed hope, and approaching the spot where Ida was still seated, he sat down by her side. The beautiful girl blushed scarlet and would have fled, but he detained her by clasping her hands in his own.

"I met your friend, Mr. Gordon, a moment ago," said Rafe, mischievously, "and he seemed to be terribly downcast about something. What is the matter with him?"

"How should I know?" replied Ida, trying to withdraw her hands.

"But he was talking with you; I heard your voices. He looked like I fancy a man would who has proposed to the woman he loves, and has been rejected. Did you refuse him?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Because I think you treat him badly, little girl. He is a good fellow, and loves you devotedly. If you knew how you hurt his feelings, you would not treat him so."

"It seems to me you concern yourself a good deal about that man's affairs," said Ida, growing indignant and almost ready to cry. "What difference does it make to you?"

"Well, my darling, I love you so myself that I can feel for others who love you, as I fear I do, hopelessly. Dear little Ida, can you ever care for me any, or must I, like poor Gordon, kiss you and depart forever?"

Ida gazed earnestly upon him for a moment; then, sobbing with joy, she threw her arms around his neck and hid her blushing, happy face on his shoulder.

"That's right, little girl," said Rafe. "Do you know, when I held you in my arms under the chestnut tree, I vowed that they should be your resting place through life."

"And I loved you at first sight, too," confessed Ida, shyly.

"Even so, darling. If we do not love at first sight, we never will love at all," said Rafe, kissing her lips.

With which little bit of very doubtful philosophy we will leave them.

☞ "A package of seeds," directed to a Missouri man by his loving rival, turned out to be an infernal machine.

☞ Courting after marriage—applying for a divorce.

'TIS FIVE-AND-TWENTY YEARS.

BY A. S. HOOKER.

Sitting upon our cottage stoop,
By autumn maples shaded,
I call the gentle visions up
That time had nearly faded.
The evening light comes from the west
In streams of golden glory;
So fold your head, love, on my breast,
And hear my olden story.

'Tis five-and-twenty years, my dear,
Since, hearts and hands together,
We launch'd our bark, the ocean clear
And all serene the weather.
With simple trust in Providence,
We set the sails upon her;
My fortune, hope and common sense,
Your dowry, love and honor.

For five-and-twenty years, my dear,
The billows lightly skimming,
One day the skies grew mark and drear,
Our eyes and spirits dimming.
How dark that night frown'd overhead,
When hope foresaw no morrow,
And we beside our firstling dead
Drank our first cup of sorrow.

'Tis five-and-twenty years, my dear,
Yet music's in our dwelling,
The children's prattle that we hear
About our hearthstone swelling.
God bless them all, the loving band
So glad to call you mother;
With heart to heart and hand to hand
Clinging to one another.

Through five-and-twenty years, my dear,
Whene'er my arm was weary,
And scarce I knew the way to steer,
Your words were ever cheery.
When mid the tempest and the night,
With courage sorely shrinking,
Then on our way God gave us light
That kept our faith from sinking.

'Tis five-and-twenty years, my dear,
Slight change in you revealing;
But o'er my brow—you see them here—
The silver hairs are stealing.
Yet let them come, while still thy breast
Retains the fond emotion
That nerved my arm when first we prest
Our way out on life's ocean.

DENE HOLLOW.

BY MRS. HENRY WOOD,

AUTHOR OF

"EAST LYNNE," &c.

[The advance sheets of this story have been purchased of Mrs. Wood for THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.]

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE WEDDING DAY.

Snow, snow, nothing but snow. It lay on the ground as persistently as though it meant to stay with the world forever. The tops of the houses at Worcester; the distant Malvern Hills; the trees and hedges, the fields and dales intervening between each, and the whole vast surrounding landscape presented a surface whiter than the whitest alabaster.

In the drawing-room at Mrs. Arde's was a motley company. Motley in regard to appearance. For while some of them wore the gala attire suitable for a marriage, others presented quite an ordinary appearance. Take Captain Clanwaring, for instance: he was in bridegroom's costume; May, on the contrary, had on a homely dress of ruby stuff. The Lady Lydia Clanwaring was resplendent in shining silk and lace. Mrs. Arde and her sister were in morning gowns. Otto Clanwaring was attired to match his brother. Charlotte Scrope, the bridesmaid, a pretty girl of eighteen, was plain as the bride.

For this was Tuesday, the wedding morning; and the great question agitating those assembled, together with two or three others not necessary to mention, was—should the marriage take place, or should it not.

When the previous day, Monday, did not bring Mr. Arde, and it was likewise known that none of the London mails or other coaches, due some days now, had reached Worcester, the Hall fell into real consternation. Captain Clanwaring protested most strongly against the ceremony being delayed, even though Tuesday morning should not bring the Squire; but Mrs. Arde answered to this, sensibly enough, that without her husband there could be no marriage, as he was bringing the license with him. May said little on the Monday for or against; nothing indeed; for she assumed to a certainty that she could not be married under these drawbacks. The dinner had been held the previous night, and was somewhat of a failure in its master's absence. Some of the guests, too, could not get there for the snow. Mrs. Arde presided; and her sister, who was staying with them, helped her to make the best of it. And so Tuesday came in; and had not brought the Squire. Mrs. Arde then despatched hasty messengers to as many friends bidden to the marriage as were within reach, to say it would not take place that day. Sir Dene was progressing favorably: but Mr. Friar, together with the physician called in from Worcester, enjoined the strictest quiet.

Captain Jarvis Clanwaring was on the wing early, on his part. While it was yet dark he quitted Beechhurst Dene, rode into Worcester, and procured a license. By ten o'clock he was at home again, somewhat sooner than he had hoped, and brought word that the weather was breaking up.

"I cannot risk the chance of its being delayed even for a day," he observed in some agitation to his mother, as he went to attire himself for the ceremony. And my Lady Lydia answered of course not: though perhaps she had no idea of the imminent peril he was in. So Captain Clanwaring was driven to the Hall, the license in his hand; and my lady, with the rest of the company at Beechhurst Dene, speedily followed. His dismay was excessive when he found the ladies not dressed, and Mrs. Arde quietly saying there could be no wedding that day.

"It is cruel, cruel!" spoke the captain to Mrs. Arde—and his agitation, that he could not quite disguise, spoke volumes in that lady's mind for the depth of his love. "There is no impediment now: here's the license: and perhaps by the time we are at the church Mr. Arde will be here, for the roads are undoubtedly becoming traverseable. Don't, *don't* put off the wedding: it always brings ill-luck. Let Mary dress!"

Mrs. Arde glanced at her daughter, as much as to ask what her decision should be—at least, the sanguine captain so interpreted it. Mary, calm as the snow outside and perhaps as cold, shook her head. "No, no," was all she said.

"But May, my dear May, surely—"

"No, not without papa," interrupted May, cutting short the bridegroom's remonstrance; and this time her voice took a tone of fear. "I will not be married in this uncertainty. My father may not be safe."

In Captain Clanwaring's angry vexation he gave vent to a word, spoken contemptuously. "Safe!" Recalling himself on the instant, he softly implored her not to persist in her decision, not to invoke ill-luck upon their union. May remained quietly firm: and to the captain's annoyed fancy, it almost seemed that she was glad of the respite.

At that moment, the church bells burst out a merry peal. Mrs. Arde, though she had sent to the clergyman, had forgotten to send to the clerk. That functionary had gone to the church with the bell-ringers, expecting the wedding party every minute; and this was the result. Captain Clanwaring, unmindful of the cold, threw up the window at which they were standing.

"Listen, May! Surely you will not let them ring for nothing."

"Indeed, and I think the wedding ought to be to-day, my dear," spoke up old Miss Clewer, from the depths of her large white quilted satin bonnet, and gray dress of twilled silk. "As my grand-nephew observes, a put-off wedding sometimes brings ill luck; it has resulted within my own knowledge in there being none at all."

An awful suggestion for the bridegroom, flushing his pale face to a hot crimson. Lady Lydia came to the rescue: not attacking the decision of Mary, but of Mrs. Arde. But the lady proved to be as firm as her daughter. She had never had any intention of being otherwise.

"My dear Lady Lydia, you ask an impossibility. I hinted to Captain Clanwaring yesterday that the deeds of settlement were not signed: cannot be until the arrival of Mr. Arde: and now you oblige me to speak out. Were it my daughter's own wish that the ceremony should be solemnized, I could not accede to it. She cannot marry until the completion of the settlements."

Mrs. Arde spoke very decisively. She had of course right on her side, and her child's interests to see to. Failing any settlement, all that May possessed would become the property of the gallant captain. Even he and his mother could not decently urge that. No more was to be said. It would only be putting off the wedding for a day, as everybody agreed, say until the morrow: now that the weather was breaking, a few hours would no doubt bring the Squire. Captain Clanwaring, terribly grumpy, had to submit: but he did it with a bad grace, not caring to conceal his mortification. As to the barrister, Otto, he had not spoken a word for or against it.

And so the bells, clanging out in their innocence, clanged out still, unconscious that there was no wedding to ring for. It had the effect of calling innumerable gazers to the church, from far and near. A report had gone about the previous night that perhaps the ceremony might be postponed if the Squire did not arrive: but when the bells were heard, it was assumed to be taking place.

"Do send to stop the bells, mamma!" pleaded May.

With her whole heart, Mrs. Arde wished her visitors would depart. It was an uncomfortable morning for her. No one seemed at ease; she least of any. Soon after twelve o'clock struck, when some of them were preparing to go, a party of morris-dancers came on to the green. Of course all stayed then, and crowded the windows to look.

"Harriet," whispered Mrs. Arde to her sister, "I cannot stand this any longer; my nerves have been on the strain all the morning and are giving way. Do you play hostess for a bit."

She slipped out of the room, put on a warm shawl and hood, and made her way to the foot avenue that ran beside the lawn and the approach to it. The snow had been swept, and she paced it thoughtfully, lifting her face to the cold fresh air, and looking through the bare side branches at the morris-dancers. Fleet of foot and not ungraceful were those men; their white attire was decorated with all kinds of colored ribbons, that kept time and waved about to their steps and their staves. The figures were prolonged and the men did their best; at Arde Hall the morris-dancers were sure of a meal and a largesse, whenever it was a hard winter and they were shut out from their legitimate labor.

Though a tolerably common sight in those long-past winters, it was not a very frequent one, and idle spectators from the road were running in to gaze, quite a small crowd of them. The disappointed ones, who had been to the church and found no wedding, happened to be passing back again, and flocked in at the large gates. Mrs. Arde, pacing the solitary avenue, chanced to turn her attention from the dancers to these spectators, and saw amidst them Emma Geach.

And yet, not exactly amidst them. They were thronging the gate and the railings before the lawn; this girl had drawn herself up close to the fence that skirted the side of the lawn, as if she did not care to be noticed. She stood there, leaning one arm against it, her old cloak muffled about her, and looking at the dancers with a listless air.

Obeying the moment's impulse, Mrs. Arde stepped through the beech trees and approached her. Putting aside the girl's naturally bold manners, Mrs. Arde had always rather liked Emma Geach, and had pitied her isolated condition—isolated from all good associations—at the Trailing Indian. This alone might have caused her to accost the girl; but she had another motive. At the time the communication was made to her by Susan Cole on Sunday night, Mrs. Arde fully disbelieved it, regarding it as a foolish scandal on Captain Clanwaring; but since then, a *doubt*, a very ugly doubt, had insinuated itself over and anon within her mind; and instinct now prompted her to set it at rest.

"Is it you, Emma? I heard you were back."

"Yes, it's me," replied Emma, turning her head at the salutation. "I've been to the church to see the wedding, ma'am; but it's said there is to be none."

"Not to-day. The Squire is absent."

"Can't get home for the choked-up roads," freely remarked Miss Emma. "*I* had a fine slow journey of it in the wagon."

"Where did you come from?"

"Well, I came from Lunnon. No need to hide it, that I know of."

"Not from Ireland?"

The girl's eyes flashed with quite an angry light.

"Yes, I hear that *that* have been brought again me, but it's false as—"

"It has been said that when you left here you went to Bristol to join Mr. Tom Clanwaring," interrupted Mrs. Arde.

"When I left here I went straight to Lunnon, as I was bid to go by him that led me wrong; and I've never been away from it till I took the wagon to come down here again."

Mrs. Arde gazed in the girl's face, reading it eagerly. There was a savage look in it, a passionate ring in her voice, that spoke too surely of the naked truth.

"It was Tom Clanwaring's name that was coupled with yours, you know, Emma, even before you left the place."

"Mrs. Arde, I never did know it. If I had I hain't sure but I should ha' set it to rights then. 'Twas a shame on him for folks to say it. Mr. Tom!—why, he had always been as good as a brother to me from the time I was that high"—clapping a lath that ran along the fence. "Least ways, as much o' one as a gentleman can be to a poor girl. Mr. Tom Clanwaring is just as good and noble and straightforward, as t'other is a cheating and lying sneak. Black and him must ha' put their heads together, and laid it on Mr. Tom."

"The other being Jarvis Clanwaring?" spoke Mrs. Arde.

"Him, and none other; Jarvis Clanwaring. When he had got his turn served, he just threw me over, Mrs. Arde. He did; and I don't mind who knows it now. It's six months a'most since he've been to see me, or sent me aught to get a crust o' bread. I've been nigh upon starving. I might ha' starved outright but for a good woman whose room I lodged in; she helped me what she could."

"You are telling me the truth?" asked Mrs. Arde.

"It's the truth—as God hears me. I'd a mind to ha' told it out to Captain Clanwaring's face i' the church this morning when he was a being married; and I think I should ha' done it. 'Twas only the thought o' one thing might ha' stopped me—and that's the trouble and pain 'twould ha' gave Miss May. When I heard 'twas him she was a going to marry I pitied her a'most to crying; a good-for-nothing knave like him can't bring her much good."

"You should have told of this before to-day, for Miss May's sake," said Mrs. Arde, sharply.

"I knew naught about the wedding till the night afore last," spoke the girl; "I never knew as he was living down at Beechhurst Dene. He let me think he was about in places a serving with his regiment: but it seems he have sold out on't."

"Where is the baby?" whispered Mrs. Arde.

"It died when it was born, ma'am. And a happy thing, too. Jarvis Clanwaring, grand as the world thinks him, is just a bad man, Mrs. Arde, made up o' deceit and heartlessness. Bring me to him, and I'll say it to his face. He have been up to his ears in debt, too, this long while. Perhaps you didn't know o' that, either."

Mrs. Arde made no answer. The morris dancers had brought their performance to an end; and the spectators were coming away. Perhaps Mrs. Arde did not care to be seen talking to Emma Geach: for she wished her good-morning, and turned towards home. What she had heard three parts stunned her. May came into her chamber almost as she was entering it.

"Mamma," she cried, her face pale, her voice beseeching, "you will not let this wedding take place before papa returns. Promise me! Captain Clanwaring is saying—"

"Be at rest, May," interrupted Mrs. Arde, bending to kiss her, "you shall certainly not marry before your father is here."

And the very emphatic tone, telling of strange anger, a little surprised Miss May.

Careering into the faithful city of Worcester, the coachman driving his four fine horses at a somewhat faster speed than their usual majestic pace, the guard's horn blowing blasts of importance, went the Royal Mail. Along Sidbury, up College street and High street, through the cross, and on to the Foregate street; where it finally drew up before the two principal inns of the town, the Hoppole and the Star-and-Garter. People had run out at their shop doors to see it pass; a small crowd collected round it almost before it stopped; for it was the first mail that had reached Worcester since the detention. The supposition prevailing was, that it was the mail known to have been so long on the road, the one that started from London the past Friday. The curous people running up, were eager to know what it had been doing with itself, and where the detention had been. Quite a chorous of questions assailed the guard and coachman as they descended from their seats; and then it was discovered that this was not the last mail at all, but the regular mail that had made the journey in due course and without much delay; having quitted the Bull-and-mouth the previous evening. In the check their curiosity sustained, they began to walk off again one by one. This was Wednesday morning.

This mail brought but one passenger: a sharp-looking, active man, who leaped out of the inside, and had no luggage with him. He was a little stared at. It was concluded that his business must be of importance, to travel in that ungenial weather, and risk being buried in the snow on the road.

"Didn't yo see nor hear nothing o' that there last mail, that have been so long a coming?" questioned a bystander, of the guard.

"No, nothing. It passed Woodstock, and it didn't get to Chipping Norton; so must be somewhere between the two places," was the guard's answer. "But whether it's above ground, or dead and buried below the snow, and its folks dead and buried with it, is more than I can say."

"Had you much difficulty in getting along, guard?" questioned a gentleman.

"No, sir. The worst was between Woodstock and Evesham. In places there we almost stuck fast; but—"

"Can I charter a horse and gig from this hotel, guard? I want one immediately."

The interruption, spoken in a sharp imperative tone, came from the passenger. Finding that he could charter a horse and gig, he ordered it to be got ready without any delay, and ran into the Star to drink half a glass of brandy-and-water.

"Wouldn't you like some breakfast, sir?—or luncheon?" asked the bar-maid.

"I have not time for either."

The gig came to the door, together with a man whom the traveller had requested should accompany him: a tall, strong young fellow belonging to the Star-and-Garter stables. The landlord came out to see them start.

"Have you far to go?" he asked.

"About three or four miles, I fancy," was the reply. "I am a stranger in these parts."

Away they started; he taking the reins himself, and whipping the horse into a canter; turning down Broad street, onwards over the Severn bridge, and so out of the town that way. In due course of time he came to the neighborhood of Beechhurst Dene, and—there arrested Mr. Jarvis Clanwaring. It was accomplished without the slightest trouble.

On the Tuesday evening a note had been delivered to Captain Clanwaring at Beechhurst Dene from Mrs. Arde, it stated in unmistakable decisive terms, that until the return of Mr. Arde there would be no marriage; all things must remain in abeyance. The captain could do nothing—save relieve his feelings by a bit of hot swearing in his chamber. On the following morning there was no Mr. Arde; but in the course of it Captain Clanwaring walked over to the Hall. He did not get to see the ladies—which he considered very strange. Susan Cole brought him a message that Miss May was very poorly with a headache (and not to be wondered at!) put in Susan, in parenthesis, and her mistress was busy writing letters. So Captain Clanwaring, rather discomfited, took his way back home again. He was crossing the upper road in a sauntering kind of manner, his eyes moodily bent on the ground to pick his way over the snow, which was still lying there, when a passing gig came to a sudden standstill, its driver leaped down, and Jarvis Clanwaring, gentleman and ex-captain, found him elf in custody.

"Curse you, Billing!" was all he said, gnashing his teeth with impatient rage. For he knew the capturer by sight.

"'Twould have been done an hour or two earlier, captain, but for the snow keeping the mail back," was the man's equable answer. "A fine tether you've had of it altogether."

The arrest was for a very large sum of money, and it was of no use to fight against it. Persuasion and resistance would alike be futile, as the unfortunate captain knew. Fate is stronger than we are. The public arrest had been witnessed by at least two people, one of whom chanced to be Mark, the servant at the Hall; and the news went about with a whirr.

The captor and the captured, the gig and the supernumerary proceeded to Beechhurst Dene. Jarvis was in an awful fever to get free; we should have been so in his place. There was only one way by which it could be accomplished—by paying the money; or else by bail that was as good as money. It was possible, though not very probable, that Sir Dene might have settled the matter could he have been appealed to; but the state in which Sir Dene was lying, partially if not quite insensible, put any appeal to him out of the question. The heir, Dene, was not there; nobody was there, but the barrister.

"You will give bail for me, Otto?" said the crest-fallen captain, who felt as if he would very much like to shoot somebody—perhaps himself.

"Couldn't take Mr. Otto Clanwaring's bail," interposed Mr. Billing gruffly; for nature had endowed him with an uncommonly gruff voice. "Couldn't accept anybody's undertaking, except the Baronet's, Sir Dene."

"But Sir Dene is ill, you know; paralyzed," remonstrated the unhappy captain.

"Yes, captain. More's the pity for you."

"If my brother gives you his undertaking it will be as sure as Sir Dene's, Billing," urged the captain. "He—"

"I could not give it, Jarvis," interrupted the cautious barrister. "You must know that I am not in a position to take a debt upon me that might prove an incubus for my life-time. And where should I get the money from, do you suppose, if called upon to pay it?"

"It will stop my marriage," breathed Jarvis, biting his feverish lips. "I have been looking to that to save me from this gulf. Those cursed roads! But for Arde's delay, I should have been married and safely away, Otto! Stretch a point for me."

"The counsellor's promise would be of no more worth than yours, captain—begging pardon of him for saying it," reiterated the sheriff's officer. "Besides, there's more behind this," was the candid avowal.

As Otto Clanwaring had felt fully sure of. If this one debt, on which Jarvis was arrested, were settled, a host of others on which judgment had been obtained, lay behind it. In fact, it was pretty plain that Captain Clanwaring's career was for the time over.

"And my marriage?" he groaned. "What's to become of that?"

"You could not think of marrying Miss Arde, now, though you were free," urged Otto in his strictness. "At least, without informing them of the facts. It would be a most dishonorable thing, so to deceive the Arde family."

"Halt your cant," retorted the exasperated prisoner.

There was no loop-hole of escape for him; none. In later weeks, when Sir Dene was cognizant of the affair and able to converse upon it, he said that Jarvis's sins had come home to him. Mr. Billing and the extra man and the captain all took their departure together in the gig; the latter wedged securely in between the two others.

When the Lady Lydia Clanwaring got home towards dinner time—for she with Miss Ann Clewer and Mrs. Letsom, finding there would be no wedding that day, had driven over to spend it in Worcester—she found what had taken place. Her beloved son, of whom she had made a very idol, and would have willingly offered up all the rest of the world in sacrifice at his shrine, had been ignominiously conveyed away, a prisoner; and was even then on his road by night coach to be lodged in one of the jails of the metropolis! My lady rose the house with her frantic cries.

Somebody else got home the same evening—and that was Squire Arde. For the long-detained mail had contrived to free itself that day, and reach Worcester at last: causing a hubbub and congratulation that some of the old citizens may yet remember. The first thing the Squire heard when inside his own doors, was the news of Captain Clanwaring's arrest and of his heavy embarrassments. For many-tongued rumor had been exceedingly busy with the unfortunate captain's fame all the afternoon; and fame, hitherto unsuspected, had come out in a remarkable manner.

Captain Clanwaring arrested!—and taken off a prisoner to the Fleet!—and overhead and shoulders in debt and embarrassment!

Captain Clanwaring who but for these heavy snow drifts would now be Mary's husband! Squire Arde turned hot and cold as he listened.

What an escape it was for Mary! How Jarvis Clanwaring had managed to stave off the evil day so long and to conceal the true state of things, was a mystery. The selling of the commission had been forced. It was a stop-gap for the time; since, the Lady Lydia and others had helped him, including those harpies, the London money-lenders. The indignant Squire found that his daughter's money was indeed required—that there was urgent need of the marriage being hastened on.

"What an escape!" aspirated the Squire in solemn thankfulness. "And I—Heaven forgive me!—murmured rebelliously at the delay caused by the snow-storm, little thinking that it was saving my child! Perhaps God sent that detention in His love for her!"

Within the privacy of her own chamber that night, sitting over the fire, Mrs. Arde whispered another item of news in her husband's ear—that which was connected with Miss Emma Geach. For some little time the Squire would not take it in: but when convinced of its truth, he began stamping about the room in wrath so great and loud, that poor Mrs. Arde was fain to beg him to be still lest the household should think he was beating her.

"Let 'em think it!" roared the Squire. "The desperate villain! And he would have made a wife of my innocent child!"

Hardly giving time for morning dawn well to set in, the Squire stamped up to the the Trailing Indian to "have it out" with Black. He told that worthy innkeeper that he was a base villain, not a shade better than the other villain; that they had sacrificed the good name of Tom Clanwaring, and nearly sacrificed the life's happiness of Miss Arde.

And she, Mary Arde: how did she take the disappointment relating to her marriage?—to most young ladies the breaking off of a marriage is, to say the least of it, mortifying. Not so with Mary Arde. She was as one released from a weight of despair. She warbled about the house like a freed bird. Susan Cole, who could not have kept her tongue silent had she been paid to do it, had disclosed to her lots of things. The lightness came back to Mary's steps, the color to her cheeks; it was as if some special happiness had fallen on her heart from Heaven.

"She could not have liked him!" cried the wondering Squire to his wife.

"She did not," said Mrs. Arde. "I fear she liked Tom Clanwaring too well for that."

The Squire frowned a hideous frown at the unwelcome name. Though Tom had been shamefully aspersed, and been proved innocent where he had been thought guilty, he was not the less ineligible to be "liked" by May. "And never will be," spoke the Squire hotly.

And that poor neglected scapegoat was never so much as thought of by the world, or by Beechhurst Dene. Tom Clanwaring was in the place deemed most appropriate for him: some remote district of Irish bog, working out his sins.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LAST OF RANDY BLACK.

Turning out of the gate of Harebell Farm went Mary Barber. Rare indeed was the fact of her going abroad without any particular object; and yet she was doing so this late afternoon. It had been the monthly wash that week at the farm; but the weather had been favorable for drying, and the close of this day, Wednesday, saw all the things done up, and in their appropriate presses and drawers. Mary Barber, assisted by one of the women servants, had been ironing hard for many hours: and when the early tea was over, betook herself out for a walk. Partly because she had no other pressing employment to get to, chiefly that she had an unusual feeling upon her of being stifled indoors. So, putting on her every-day shawl and bonnet, away she went.

"Curious I should feel as if I wanted fresh air, me!" she said half aloud. "I must be getting old; that's it: and I be getting old, for that matter. Well, I've had my health and strength better nor most people: and there's some good work in my arms yet. Suppose I'd had a weak heart, as my poor sister had!—and died of it, as she did! Them boys of hers be getting on like a house afire: quite gentlefolk they be now, though me, their aunt, Mary Barber, can't be called much else but a upper servant.

Walking up Harebell Lane, she glanced at the budding hedges on either side, at the springing grass. It was only February yet, but the most lovely weather conceivable, warm enough for May. The prolonged and heavy snow storm of the previous winter seemed to have benefited the earth. They would have it cold again no doubt: but just now the days were bright and beautiful. Mary Barber went along sniffing the air, as if she could not enjoy it enough: shut up all day with the hot ironing stove, bending over the linen she ironed, the freshness was only too welcome. The setting sun threw its golden rays slantwise; birds were chirping their last song before settling down in their nests, all nature seemed glad. Primroses and violets nestled in the banks of the shady lane: hard Mary Barber actually stooped and gathered some. She was feeling less hard than usual that evening. Life had been all prose for her, no poetry at all in it. Perhaps it was the unusual weariness that softened her: not exactly weariness of limb but weariness of spirit. Her thoughts were running into a groove not at all customary.

"Says Richard Pickering to me 'tother morning in Worcester when I ran again him coming out o' the hop market, 'You should not stay on at Harebell Farm, Aunt Mary'—a calling of me 'aunt' for once, he did—'but have a nice little home of your owe, and live comfortably in it.' 'Twas the old pride in part made him say it: neither him nor Willie have ever liked my being in service, 'specially him. 'We'd help you to the home,' he went on, 'I and William—we want you to have rest, Mary.' And he's right, I say: for I am beginning to feel the need o' rest, and service is getting hard for me. But I don't care to be helped by them, and what I've saved isn't quite enough to keep me yet. Bother take it! What has set me on o' these thoughts this evening, I wonder? I think I'll get Friar to give me a dose o' physic to put me to rights. 'Twon't do to fail i' my work."

Approaching Harebell Pond—which she did not do once in two years as a rule; no, not in four—the sad fate of her former master, Robert Owen, (a fate which every one had long ago given up all hope of clearing) recurred to her. Every circumstance connected with it flashed into her mind as vividly as though it had passed but yesterday. The singular dream, when she and others, quite a crowd of them, seemed to be searching for him up this very lane and across the fields, all bearing for one point, the direction of the Trailing Indian; and the absolute later reappearance; and her visit to the inn in the morning when Emma Geach was a wailing infant of a few hours old, and the mother lay in danger up stairs; and the commotion and uncertainty altogether, until the water gave up its secret; like the bits of glass in a kaleidoscope fixing themselves into their places one after another, so the past events rolled through her mind.

She passed the pond with a glance and a shudder, slightly quickening her steps. A few yards onwards there arose a hazy kind of indecision in her purpose, whether she should go straight on through the gate leading into some fields on Sir Dene's home farm that lay beyond, or continue her way up the lane—which here took the sharp wind to the right. Her feet, unprompted, as it seemed—for certainly she was not conscious of making any decision herself—chose the latter. In after life Mary Barber was wont to say that an instinct from heaven guided her.

"I'll go to the end, just as far as the turnpike road; and then turn back," she said to herself, finding which way her apparently purposeless feet had taken her.

This brought her, as the reader must know, past the Trailing Indian. Mary Barber turned her eyes upon that hostelrie in some curiosity, past associations rendering it always a place of interest. Since Miss Emma Geach's return to take up her abode in it, the inn had shone some slight signs of renewed life. That bustling damsel, ready of service, free of tongue, made a pleasanter hostess than Black and Sam Pound had made hosts; and stragglers were beginning to drop in again for half pints of ale or cider. As to Sam, his worst fears had been realized; he was dismissed.

The golden beams of the sun, partly below the horizon now, had turned to crimson, and the front casements caught the red glow. The side door of the inn stood open, but there was no other sign of life or habitation about the dwelling. It looked very solitary, and everything around was still, including the evening air.

"She's out," thought Mary Barber. "Else there'd be some clatter o' dishes going on; and her tongue with it. As to Black—"

The words were stopped by a startling sound. If ever Mary Barber heard a groan of agony, she heard one then. Whence did it come? She turned to look about her, and there arose another. No mistake now, they came from the house.

"Anything the matter?" she called out, making her way to the side door.

A succession of moans answered her; painful moans, telling of some awful calamity. Mary Barber was not timorous; she had seen too many ugly sights in her life for that, including ghosts; but it was certain that a tremor of fear seized on her then, and she would willingly have turned back, rather than enter.

"What be that?" she asked, halting outside the kitchen door.

My, what was it? Mary Barber groaned herself when she went in, and saw.

Randy Black was stretched on the kitchen floor, bleeding from a wound in the side, his gun lying beside him.

He had got the gun out intending to clean it, unconscious that it was loaded. The charge went off and shot him. It appeared that he had lent the gun to one of his friends, named Haxted.

When the man returned it, Black asked if it was charged—and Haxted replied no. *He* had understood Black to say, have you drawn the charge?—as was explained when too late.

Whatever ill had encompassed Black's life, Mary Barber could but feel the deepest compassion for him now. Something in his face would have told her the injury was mortal without his confirming words, "It's my death! It's my death."

What could she do alone? Emma Geach had gone off to Worcester for the Wednesday's market, and to buy herself some gowns. While she was on her knees, doing what she could to staunch the blood, and nearly at her wit's end, young Cole entered: and Mary Barber said Providence had sent him.

"You be fleet o' foot, Ham. Put out the best speed yere got, lad, and get Friar up here. And list ye," she added, in a whisper, drawing the young man's ear down; "when Friar's come off, run round to the parson, and ask *him* to please to come. If ever a mortal man wanted shriving when his soul was on the wing, it must be this un, lying here."

Apparently Mr. Black was thinking somewhat of the same. Whence he gathered his deductions, perhaps he could not have defined; but that death was close upon him he felt sure and certain. And—strange though it may be to say it of this hardened and bad man, whose whole life had been marked by recklessness; who had laughed at death, and set it, and what must come after it, at defiance as a thing that could not concern him—he was now shrinking from it in affright, the veriest coward! Such instances have been known—where this awful terror has assailed a soul at the close of an ill-spent life. It was not the life so suddenly cut short that the man was regretting: that appeared not to give him a thought: it was the dread judgment to which he was hastening.

Mary Barber turned him round, for he had been lying on the wound, and found a pillow to put under his head on the kitchen bricks, and gave him a sup of brandy, which he asked for. The bleeding seemed to stop, and he was in less pain.

"When did it happen?" she asked.

"Only just afore you come," groaned Black. "I'd got the gun muzzle up'ards, and was a turning round to light a candle."

And then he gave vent to words and plaints and cries, that surely would never have been wrung from him in health; ay, and prayers. Prayers that he would at all times have scoffed at. Prayers for mercy: prayers to be let perish forever as a dog, and be no more heard of after death. Mary Barber was horrified; she compassionated him with her whole heart; she knelt down, raising her hands together, and asked for pardon for him even at that, the eleventh hour. The man was beside himself with fear. He called for more brandy, and when she hesitated to give it him, he swore at her in some of the worst language he had ever used in his wild career. The next minute he was beseeching her and Heaven alike to forgive him. She administered a little brandy; not much; for she was afraid to do it without the sanction of Mr. Friar.

"Friar 'll be up soon, Black," she said; "you shall have it then, if he'll let you."

The man's faculties appeared to be almost supernaturally clear; his intellect and memory bright as they had ever been in life; his reason as free; but a degree of physical exhaustion came on, and then he lay comparatively still. Mary Barber seized upon the interval to tell him about the thief on the cross, and Black hushed his breath while he listened.

"He had been bad, too, Black, that man had; but the Saviour pardoned him. With the Lord it is only to repent, and ask, and have."

Black turned his head about on the pillow and moaned and sighed and muttered: but was still quiet. A thought came into the woman's mind, and she promptly acted on it.

"I'd like to ask ye one thing, Black, while there's time; 'twon't hurt you to answer it now, one way or 'tother. The bag of money stole from Sir Dene's parlor that New Year's Day—was it you took it?"

"Was it *me* took it?" retorted Black with a touch of his old fierceness. "What d'ye mean!"

"Some of 'em be a suspecting Tom Clanwaring on't still, as it strikes me," was her reply. "Only this very morning Squire Arde, who come up to the farm a wanting to see the master, stood by my ironing-board, a talking on't. I said 'twas curious Mr. Tom didn't come back now things again him had been cleared up: at that the Squire went quite in a passion, and said things again him were not cleared up, and the fellow was not wanted back. It could have been nothing but the money he was thinking of, Black: there's nought else lying against Mr. Tom now."

Black's eyes were cast up towards her; dark and almost fierce as ever were they. But he made no answer.

"Tom Clanwaring never harmed you, Randy. He showed himself friendly always, and did you many a good turn: if 'twas you took the money, you might confess it now, for his sake."

"The man as took the bag o' money was Captain Clanwaring."

"*What?*" cried Mary Barber, interrupting the hoarse, deep tones.

"The man as took the bag o' money was Jarvis Clanwaring," repeated Black. "I swear it with my dying breath."

Mary Barber peered into Black's face, believing his senses were deserting him. He saw the doubt.

"That there Saturday night, soon after I got home here myself, up come Captain Clanwaring. He owed me money, and he had got frightened for fear I should let out things he didn't want let out—for in the morning I told him I'd do it if he didn't pay me. He gave me just half what he owed: and I wondered where he had got it from, for he was as hard-up, hisself, as any poor devil—"

"Was it for bacca he owed it?" she interrupted.

"No, 'twarn't for bacca," retorted Black, resenting either the question or the interruption. "'Twas put upon bacca, and that's enough. Just a few days after, Squire Arde was here, and began a fishing to know whether 'twas me took Sir Dene's bag o' money. 'Twas the first time I'd heered of any money being stole: and I knew at once who 'twas that had took it, and where Captain Clanwaring had got his money from. I see the bag in his hands, and the notes and gold in it."

"That there Captain Clanwaring must have as many sins to answer for as you, Black," spoke Mary Barber, drawing a deep breath. "Perhaps more in the sight of Heaven. Why didn't you tell o' this and clear Tom Clanwaring?"

Black shook his head. "I couldn't tell 'o the captain *then*, though I'd used to threaten it. His interests were mine till I'd got my money from him in full. And he might ha' turned on me, he might, for he knowed a thing or two."

It appeared to have been a case of rogue cutting rogue. That Captain Clanwaring and Black were mutually afraid of each other, and had acted in accordance with it, there could be no question.

A perfect yell from Black startled Mary Barber out of her momentary reflection. His side had burst out bleeding again, bringing back all his terror. Perhaps in the past few minutes, feeling easier in himself and believing the bleeding had stopped, he had been indulging some faint idea of recovery.

"I'd lead a different life, I would!" he aspirated, as if making a promise to the empty air.

The most welcome sound that ever greeted Mary Barber's ear, was that of gig wheels. Mr. Friar and his apprentice had come speeding up. They were followed by Harry Cole and others. After apprising the surgeon of what had happened, Ham had gone on his way to impart the news generally. Mr. Friar speedily cleared the kitchen of the interlopers pressing into it. Mary Barber and Harry Cole alone being suffered to remain: and the clergyman when he came.

Alas! nothing could be done to save the life that was so swiftly passing. All the skill of the medical man was not able to prolong it by one hour beyond its allotted time. Black was not moved from his position. On the kitchen floor he had fallen, and on the kitchen floor he remained to die. Some blankets were gently slid under him to make it less hard, but he might not be disturbed further.

In the presence of the clergyman and doctor, of Mary Barber and of Harry Cole, he made a confession; some dim hope that it might serve him when he should stand before the great Judge in that dread Hereafter, urging him to do it. Petty sins were avowed, such as smuggling, and poaching, and receiving stolen goods, a whole catalogue of such things that appeared to have been always running on. These lighter offences Black himself did not seem to think much of, but there were others. Grave crimes, beside which the lighter sunk to little. As the eye estimates things as being large or small according to comparison, so does the conscience. Randy Black had the lives of three men on his soul: the peddler, once or twice spoken of here, a gamekeeper, and Robert Owen.

The only one of them deliberately murdered was the peddler. Stupified by drink, perhaps purposely given him, he had been killed in the dead of night by Black's own hand, and afterwards buried by him and the hostler, Joe: his box of wares, some of them real gold and silver, being the inducing motive. The gamekeeper was shot by Black in a night fray, but not of deliberate intention, guns were going off on both sides. The third, Robert Owen, had been wilfully assaulted, but not wilfully murdered.

That Black was telling the truth without disguise, in this his dying hour, was all too evident: nay he sought rather to make himself out worse than better. Once this awful hour comes upon hitherto careless sinners, there can be no playing at bo-peep with the conscience.

On that long past Easter Sunday night, as may be remembered, Mr. Owen, after quitting his daughter Maria and Geoffry Clanwaring, had been traced to the two-acre meadow: the young man, Parker, having watched him cross it on his way to the cow-shed. Subsequent to that no trace of him, in life, could be discovered, and this loss Black now supplied.

After leaving the shed, Mr. Owen went back across the meadow towards his home. In the narrow path so often mentioned between the grove of trees and the pond, he halted and leaned over the fence: whether without any particular motive or from hearing some fancied sound that he would investigate, could never be known. Black, concealed in the grove of trees with a heavy stick, pushed out and dealt him a sudden and violent blow on the back of his head. It must have stunned Mr. Owen, for he fell more forward and did not lift himself: Black took him by the heels and tumbled him over into the pond. So he lay there and was drowned without a struggle: his senseless condition preventing his making any effort to save himself.

"As the Lord's above and hears me, I didna mean to kill him," gasped Black, when he had told this. "Owen o' the farm was a spying on me an' my doings, and I wanted to serve him out for it; break a arm or a leg, or crack his skull a bit, and to teach him not to come interfering in matters as was none of his. But I never meant to kill him. I thought he'd scramble out o' the pool sure enough: I run off home here a thinking it."

"But you must have gone out into the grove with the heavy stick to watch and assault him?" said the surgeon in answer to this.

"So I did," was the ready avowal. "Things had crossed me that Sunday; and I had a lot o' drink in me. I'd slep some on't off, but not all. While Joe was a shutting up, just after I woke, that dratted Owen o' the farm come slap into my head. I thought I'd go and see whether he was a sneaking and peeping then; and I caught up my stick and went and hid i' the grove and waited. I knew his cow was sick, and fancied he might be for coming to 't the last thing. But I swear I didn't think to kill him, and when I come home here and telled Joe, we both chuckled over the scousing he'd got, and I went up to bed a picturing of him trailing home through the lane like a drowned rat. Next morning, when Joe came creeping to my bed side, a saying that Owen hadn't turned up nowhere and was a being inquired for at our house here, I was hard o' belief, and telled him to his face he was a lying fool. No, I never killed him willful."

Mary Barber threw her hands over her face, and sobbed a sob of emotion. Rarely had she been so moved. Memory was ever busy with her. The vivid dream—not less vivid now than when she had dreamt it—that had surely foreshadowed her master's death, passed through her mind for a second time that evening in all its details. *He* passed through it. She saw him walking in from church that Easter Sunday after partaking of the Lord's supper; she saw him seated at his table's head entertaining Sir Dene's son and his son-in-law, Geoffry Clanwaring; she saw him stand in the yard at sunset, speaking of Joan: it was all before her now. The sun's rays fell across his face, lighting up its remarkable beauty. Mary Barber had seen many a handsome man in her life, gentle and simple; but never one whose form and face equalled his, Robert Owen's. She had suspected Black at the time, had suspected him since, for her dream had certainly in some vague way pointed to him and his home, the Trailing Indian, as being concerned in the disappearance: and now she found that her suspicions were true. If Mary Barber had wanted her belief in dreams strengthened, this would have done it.

But, if her faith in dreams of the night was confirmed, that in regard to the appearance of supernatural visions was destined at the same time to receive a shock. Robert Owen's ghost had not been a ghost. Knowing what Mary Barber knew, remembering the experiences of her earlier life, and what she had once seen in the Hollow Field, her sister on the stile there, no power, human or divine, could have shaken her belief in the possibility of the dead appearing to mortal eyes. In this one instance, regarding her late master, she found that she and others had been craftily imposed upon.

The strange figure, appearing to the world as a supernatural visitant, and popularly believed to be the unfortunate Robert Owen's spirit, was after all only flesh and blood. Black and some of his associates, including Michael Geach, set their heads to work, and turned Mr. Owen's death to good account. The happy thought was Black's. They improvised a ghost to represent him: the object of course being to keep undesirable people away from Harebell Lane and that part of the Harebell fields that overlooked the lane. The men who were in the habit of stealing up the lane to Black's with booty about them, had been seen so many times of late that they had grown afraid, and flatly told Black that they must give up the game unless something could be done to insure greater safety. Robert Owen's ghost effected this. It was far more easy to get up a ghost of him than it would have been of most people: for there were two most strongly marked features—the flowing silvery beard, and the magpie cap. A silvery beard was procured, and another magpie cap: also clothes and a walking stick similar to those used by Mr. Owen the night of his death. Michael Geach was the ghost. He was as tall as Mr. Owen, and had the same well-formed handsome cast of features—though the shape of features cannot be seen very much of at a distance by moonlight. Arrayed in the clothes and cap, Michael Geach might have been sworn to in any moonlight court of law as Robert Owen. The best proof was that he deceived Randy Black himself.

When Black had burst into his house that unlucky night in a state of terror not easily imagined or described, and confessed that he had seen Robert Owen's ghost, his terror and his belief were alike genuine. That the man, hardened though he was in crime, had Mr. Owen's death somewhat on his conscience, various signs betrayed to those about him. Coming home from Hurst Leet that bright night, what with the natural loneliness of the lane, its weird shadow, and its awful pond—awful to Black at night since what he had done there—it was only to be expected he should begin thinking of Robert Owen: a very unpleasant thought which made him quicken his pace past the pond. Had it been to save Black's life, he could not have helped turning his eyes in a kind of dread fascination to the fence above whence Robert Owen had fallen. And there, there stood Robert Owen himself; that is, his spirit, as Black took it to be; the white beard, and the magpie cap, and the coat he was drowned in, all conspicuous.

And now here was a strange thing—that that man, hardened in sin and in the world's worst ways, should have been stricken with this most awful terror. But that he was so, and this is no fiction, it would be scarcely believable. The idea that it was Geach, never so much as crossed him: for he had reason to believe that Geach was a vast number of miles away, on the Cornish coast, in fact gone there on some secret mission connected with a privateer: that he could be in Worcestershire, even had the thought suggested itself, Black would have deemed an impossibility. Geach, however, had arrived at the Trailing Indian that evening during Blank's absence, and while waiting for the landlord to come in, it occurred to him that he might make use of the hour to profit, and he arrayed himself in the ghost's coat—which was kept at the inn—and stole out to frighten the world; putting on the cap and beard when he was safe in the grove of trees. That Geach saw the state of terror he sent Black into and enjoyed it too much to speak, there could be little doubt of, though he vowed to Black afterwards that he did not recognize him. How all that might have been does not signify: there's the explanation.

Perhaps the strangest fact of all connected with that strange business, was that Black retained his terror. Even when he knew after the elucidation, that the apparent ghost was no ghost, but his friend Michael Geach, displaying himself according to custom, the terror wholly refused to quit him. In spite of reason, in spite of knowledge, in spite of the great fact that Robert Owen's spirit had really never come abroad at all, Black lived thenceforward in a chronic state of terror lest he should see it. It was just as though some mortal disease had been caught by him that night, and could never afterwards be eradicated. Time, instead of wearing the impression off, only seemed to increase it. He hardly dared to go abroad at night; as the years went on, he cared not to remain alone in the inn after dark. The day of the ghost had, so to say, gone by: its remembrance had nearly faded out of the public mind; and yet Black retained his fear. The fear was never realized, and yet he retained it in all its force. Black thought it was realized once. When he saw Major Fife at twilight in the dark walk of Beechhurst Dene; deceived by the resemblance, he mistook him for Robert Owen, and he was never undeceived.

And so the mystery attaching to the dead master of Harebell Farm, mystery in more ways than one, was cleared up at last. Robert Owen had slept peacefully in his grave, and had never come out of it at all to disturb the community. The people connected with the Trailing Indian—meaning those who were not in the secret and shared the popular belief in the ghost—might have noticed had they been only sufficiently observant, that the apparition was never seen save during the occasional sojourns of Michael Geach at the inn, and not at all after his death. Geach once got up a fit of terror on his own part. Late one night he rushed into the Trailing Indian in a fine state of agitation, and told a story to the gaping company of having seen the ghost in the lane.

But the prolonged fear that lay on Black, lasting for years and years, was so entirely devoid of reason, so utterly absurd, especially in a man like him, as to be almost incredible. It wore him to a shadow; it embittered his life, it left him no rest, sleeping or waking. Could it have been the Finger of God that rested on him, working out the man's punishment? Mary Barber assumed so.

"It seems the Lord has been punishing you, Black," she observed compassionately after listening to his confession of how dreadful his sufferings from this terror had been. "Let us hope that He'll be all the more lenient to you now, and hear the quicker your groans for pardon."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Printing of Government Notes and What they are Made of.

As very little is known by those who generally handle or possess the circulating medium, we append the following description:—

"Government notes are printed on paper furnished expressly for the purpose by the Treasury Department. It is of a peculiar grain and texture, and manufactured by a secret process known only to a few sworn individuals. A strict account is kept of every sheet furnished to the note printers, and all which are spoiled in the process, or imperfectly struck off, must be carefully preserved and returned to the Treasury Department. Every sheet and part of a sheet must be strictly accounted for. It is thus that all probabilities of fraud are prevented. The lathes for making the scroll work cost an immense amount of money. They are so expensive that counterfeiters cannot afford to procure them. It being in this feature especially that the Government relies for protection against counterfeiters, the different bank note companies have vied with each other in building complicated and accurate lathes. A good machine for doing first-class scroll work is worth a mint of money to the owners.

"There are few persons accustomed to handling greenbacks and shinplasters daily who have any idea of the amount of work necessary to produce the engraving. We admire the fine workmanship and beauty of designs, but unless we take pains to inquire into the matter, we cannot appreciate the intricacy of detail. It is said that a man worked two whole months in engraving the head of Columbus on the back of $5 greenbacks. This seems like a somewhat improbable story, but it is doubtless true.

"A bank note or greenback is printed by several distinct impressions. That is, it is run through the press several times. For every impression there is a separate engraved plate. Proofs of these plates are taken separately and closely examined before the notes are struck off."

☞ CURIOUS CUSTOMS.—A farmer who went to a certain part of the West to buy a farm, was greatly prejudiced against the country he thought to settle in, from the fact that a doctor whom he called to attend him when he was seized with a fever, began trying on his clothes immediately after writing a prescription. The fact that while the doctor was trying on his coat the chambermaid was examining his handkerchiefs, and the porter was struggling with his boots, lent wings to his imagination and doubtless had an influence in regard to his speedy exit from the place.

☞ Quiet house-weddings will be fashionable next winter.

Mr. Beecher's Habits of Composition.

It may interest many readers to know something of Mr. Beecher's habits of composition. He writes with inconceivable rapidity, in a large, sprawling hand, lines wide apart, and words so thickly scattered about that some of his pages remind one of the famous description of a page of Napoleon's manuscript—a scratch, a blot and a splutter. Writing so hastily, he writes with some inaccuracy, and as he finds correction very irksome, he hands his manuscript over to some one familiar with his handwriting, to be prepared for the press. It is then set up, the rough proof corrected, and a fair revise handed to the author. This he reads with extreme care, and makes so many corrections, erasures, and additions, that it is sometimes cheaper and less laborious to reset the whole than to "correct" from his proofs. A second proof is then prepared for him, and sometimes a third and fourth before his critical judgment is satisfied, and the stereotyper is allowed to cast the plates. It will be noticed that in the preparation of copy Mr. Beecher's habits are directly opposite to those of Mr. Greeley, who prepares his copy with great care; punctuating every sentence, marking every capital letter, and paragraph, and in short completing his work before it leaves his hand. The compositor and the proof-reader have only to follow copy to be sure of coming out right. Mr. Beecher's impetuous temperament rebels against such laborious finish.

Why Circles Please the Eye.

The explanation of why the eye enjoys circles is thus given by one of Germany's scientists:

"Professor Muller, in a course of lectures in Berlin, offered a simple and mechanical explanation of the universal admiration bestowed on these curves. The eye is moved in its socket by six muscles, of which four are respectively employed to raise, depress, turn to the right, and to the left. The other two have an action contrary to one another, and roll the eye on its axis, or from the outside downward, and inside upward. When an object is presented for inspection, the first act is that of circumvision, or going round the boundary lines, so as to bring consecutively every individual portion of the circumference upon the most delicate and sensitive portion of the retina. Now, if figures bounded by straight lines be presented for inspection, it is obvious that but two or three muscles can be called into action; and it is equally evident that in curves of a circle or ellipse all must alternately be brought into action. The effect then is, that if two only be employed, as in rectilinear figures, those two have an undue share of labor: and by repeating the experiment frequently, as we do in childhood, the notion of tedium is instilled, and we form gradually a distaste for straight lines, and are led to prefer those curves which supply a more general and equable share of work."

A Swooning Epidemic.

Hampton Court Chapel was once the scene of a singular epidemic. One Sunday a youthful beauty fainted, and the handsome Sir Horace Seymour carried her out. The next Sunday another young lady was similarly attacked, and Sir Horace, with like gallantry, sprang to her relief. And thus the epidemic went on. On successive Sundays successive youthful beauties fainted, and the handsome Sir Horace carried them successively out, till he grew tired of bearing such sweet burdens. An announcement was made that in future all swooning nymphs would be carried out of the chapel by *the dustman*, whereupon the malady rapidly disappeared.

☞ An unreasonable and somewhat misanthropic acquaintance remarks he has often heard the proverb, "A friend in need is a friend indeed," but he says he can't see where the laugh comes in. He has a friend in need who is always borrowing money of him.

☞ Fashionable milliners in New York have fixed upon forty dollars as the maximum price for the work of art known as a lady's bonnet, the coming season.

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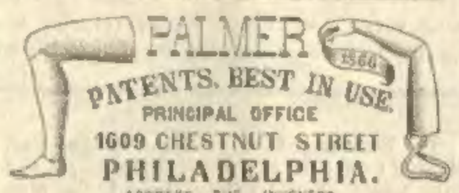

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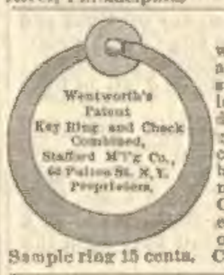

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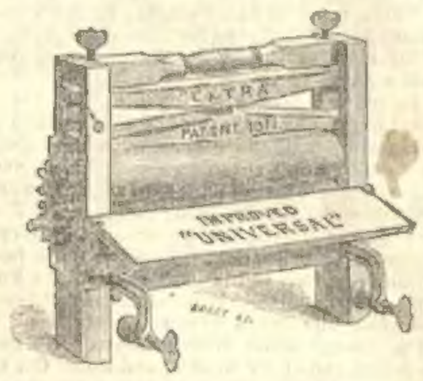

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Every year increases the popularity of this valuable Hair Preparation; which is due to merit alone. We can assure our old patrons that it is kept fully up to its high standard; and it is the only reliable and perfected preparation for restoring GRAY OR FADED HAIR to its youthful color, making it soft, lustrous, and silken. The scalp by its use, becomes white and clean. It removes all eruptions and dandruff, and, by its tonic properties, prevents the hair from falling out, as it stimulates and nourishes the hair-glands. By its use, the hair grows thicker and stronger. In baldness, it restores the capillary glands to their normal vigor, and will create a new growth, except in extreme old age. It is the most economical HAIR DRESSING ever used, as it requires fewer applications, and gives the hair a splendid, glossy appearance. A. A. Hayes, D. D., State Assayer of Massachusetts, says, "The constituents are pure, and carefully selected for excellent quality; and I consider it the BEST PREPARATION for its intended purposes."

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WHISKERS! One package of Prof. Ball's Magic Compound will force the beard to grow thick and heavy on the smoothest face (without injury) in 21 days, or money refunded; 25 cts. a package, post-paid; 3 for 50 cents. EDGAR JONES, se2-4t Ashland, Mass.

VINEGAR—how made—of Cider, Wine, or Sorgo, in 10 hours. F. SAGE, Cromwell, Conn. se2-13t

WIT AND HUMOR.

The Latest Jokes on the Printers.

There is no funnier reading in the world than some of the printers' blunders that go the rounds of the papers. Here are a few that a laugh or two may be found in:

In the office of a New York paper there stood in type the report of a sermon and a paragraph about the career of a mad dog. In "making up" these two got mixed, and the readers of the paper next day were astonished by the following melange: "The Rev. James Thompson preached to a large audience last Sunday. This was his last sermon previous to his embarkation for Europe. He exhorted his brethren and sisters, and after offering a devout prayer, took a whim to cut some frantic freaks. He ran up Smith street to Brown, and down Car to College. At this stage of the proceedings some boys seized him, tied a tea-kettle to his tail and let him go. A great crowd gathered, and for a few minutes there was a lively scene."

The London Home Journal once, in describing a wedding in high life, said that the bride was accompanied to the altar by *tight* bridesmaids. The lovely ladies were *eight*, not *tight*.

A Providence paper once announced that Rev. Dr. Wayland, President of Brown University, "gave a billiard party." The editor wrote a *brilliant* party.

The importance of careful punctuation cannot be insisted on too urgently. Here are a few instances which illustrate it:—"*Wanted*, a young man to take charge of a pair of horses of a religious turn of mind." "A child was run over by a wagon three years old and cross-eyed with pantalets which never spoke afterwards." A toast at a public dinner, "Woman—without her, man is a brute," was printed, "Woman without her man, is a brute."

Settling at "The Captain's Office."

"All dem passengers as has not settled deir passage, will please step up to de captain's office and settle."

There were many passengers, and, of course, as usual, a great crowd gathered around the "captain's office," each quietly awaiting his turn to pay. Suddenly a tall, robust young man elbowed his way through the mass of people up to the window, and stretching out his money to the clerk, said, in a very loud tone:

"Take my fare, sir?"

"What name, sir?" said the clerk, as he received the bill.

"Captain Victor Henry Digamma, sir. Captain Digamma and lady, of the Younited States Awmy, sir," was the reply, in a very pompous, conceited voice.

This was rather too much for our acquaintance, the horse dealer. He passed rudely through the crowd, and loudly addressed the ovens, while the captain of the *awmy* yet stood by, and the people seemed to be thinking whether to lynch him or not.

"Take my fare, sir?"

"What name, sir?" inquired the clerk, meekly.

"Kerp'ril John Barstow, sir. Kerp'ril John Barstow and horses, sir, of the Connecticut Militshy, sir!" was his answer, delivered in a most comical but pompous tone.

How blank that army captain looked, and what a good-natured crowd that was immediately after his answer, only those can understand whose imagination can picture reality.

In a Bad Fix.

A very good widow, who was looked up to by the congregation to which she belonged as an example of piety, contrived to bring her conscience to terms for one little indulgence. She loved porter; and one day, just as she had received half a dozen bottles from the man who usually brought her the comfortable beverage, she saw two of the grave elders of the church approaching her door. She ran the man out of the back door, and the bottles under the bed. The weather was hot, and while conversing with her sage friends pop went a cork. "Dear me!" exclaimed the good lady, "there goes the bed-cord; it snapped yesterday the same way. I must have another rope provided." In a few minutes pop went another, followed by the peculiar hiss of escaping liquor. The rope would not do again; but the good lady was not at a loss. "Dear me!" said she, "that black cat of mine must be at some mischief under there. Scat!" Another bottle popped off, and the porter came stealing out from under the bed-curtain. "O, dear me!" she said, "I had forgotten; it is my yeast! Here, Prudence, come and take these bottles of yeast away!"

A Very Ignorant Dog.

Judge Cash once had a dog case, in which the ownership of the canine was in dispute. The evidence was conflicting, and the judge became confused.

"Stop!" said he; "stop right there. We'll settle this matter very shortly. You, Mr. Clerk, hold on to the dog. You, Mr. Plaintiff, go out into the far corner of the room out there. You, Mr. Defendant, come into this corner up here. Now both of you whistle, and, Mr. Clerk, let loose the dog."

So said, so done; but the dog sprang between the legs of the bystanders and "scooted" out of the door.

"Very extraordinary! very extraordinary!" said the judge. "I can't understand that. Mr. Clerk, on the whole, as the plaintiff couldn't prove his case when I gave him the chance, you may enter judgment for the defendant."

His Card.

Prof. H., of Yale College, was passing out of the recitation room on his crutches, when an ambitious freshman dropped slyly into his cap a piece of paper, on which he had written legibly the word "monkey!" Tickled with his joke, he told his success to all his student friends. But a speedy retribution befell him. At the next recitation, the bland professor addressed his division thus, in his sweetest tones: "Gentlemen, as I was passing out of the room yesterday, one of your number did me the very high honor to leave with me his card!"

A YOUNG gentleman was seated with other persons in a room where a young girl sat bolt upright and utterly silent. Silence, indeed, fell upon the entire party, and the gentleman first alluded to said, in what he supposed to be an almost inaudible tone of voice, "Awful pause!". "I guess, mister," exclaimed the indignant lass, "that you'd have awful paws too, if you had to do the scrubbing that I does."

☞ A beautiful extract—helping a young lady out of a mud puddle.

Guy and Mary (who are betrothed) are looking very innocent, and sitting very far apart, when Emily comes into the room. But how comes Guy to have an ear-ring hanging to his whisker?

THE LITTLE GREEN MEN OF THE FOREST.

A FAIRY TALE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST BY PHILIPPA.

Many years ago, little Daisy Bell lived in a house on the edge of a forest, with her grandfather.

Daisy loved her grandpapa dearly, and no wonder—for he was a jolly old gentleman, with bright blue eyes that twinkled with merriment, soft, snow-white hair, and the kindest heart in the world.

Daisy herself was a tiny little creature, over whose golden head only five summers had passed—who was the best of friends with all the birds, squirrels, mice, toads, and even snakes, who inhabited the forest.

She loved to play in the forest among the tall old trees, where her mother had sported when she was a little girl like Daisy.

There was one spot in particular where she liked to go; it was a shady little glen, and unlike the rest of the forest which was strewn with leaves, was carpeted with soft, green moss, and this was kept fresh by a little brook that ran merrily through it—and although the forest was full of wild flowers, no where else were they in such profusion.

The birds chose this place to build their nests, the squirrels and the rabbits ran fearlessly about—and here little Daisy came to play, after she had finished her task for the day; for her grandfather did not believe in little girls playing all the time.

One day, after wearying herself with chasing the yellow butterflies, and playing Peep O! with the little birds in their nests, while the old ones sat contentedly on the branches above and looked on, for well they knew that little Daisy Bell never harmed the smallest of them, she sat down at the foot of a tree, and leaning her head against the trunk, remained quite still for a while.

At last she heard a rustling—and looking up, she saw a large company of what she supposed at first to be the large green grasshoppers; but what she found, on looking closer, to be little men, dressed all in light green.

They were bustling around, preparing their dinner; presently, by their united efforts, they brought in an immense sunflower, which they placed for a table, then unfolding a silvery table-cloth, made of a fine spider's web, they spread that upon the table.

Napkins were furnished from the satin plant, the white field daisies served for plates, while the golden butter-cups were used for cups.

The delicate lilies of the valley, were placed on the table for goblets, and the scarlet hobens for finger glasses; the cups of the lady-slipper did service for pickle dishes, their knives, forks, and spoons, were made of the stamens and pistils of flowers, and seemed strong enough for their delicate viands.

The table being ready, at a signal from the chief man a number of little figures now trooped in, bringing the different dishes that were to compose the repast.

There were pickled lark's tongues, humming bird steak, and mignonne fried, baked and broiled, the little pink crabs found in oyster shells devilled and boiled, and cakes and honey.

In the middle of the table stood a fruit basket made of a white morning glory, veined with pale blue, filled with checker berries, red, white and black currants, beech nuts, and other small fruits.

Several bees flew in and deposited honey in the strawberry blossoms which stood at each plate for preserve dishes; the little goblets were filled with dew, and mushrooms springing up around the table for seats. All was pronounced ready, when the little men, each lifting a spray of blue bells in their hands which rang merrily, approached Daisy and requested her to join them at their annual feast, which she did, and the little men served her with the viands with which the table was spread.

After dinner, some of the little men drank wine of checker berries, smoked the long Indian pipe which grew in the forest, and fanned themselves with fans made of butterfly's wings, while others brought musical instruments and played for them.

Daisy being tired now, they brought their own little beds of thistle down for her to sleep on—it took them all—and Daisy lying down, they covered her with their little coverlets made of patches of the petals of the different roses, violets and pansies, and sewed together with fine hairs, and Daisy verily believed that it was the same hair that her grandpa threw out of the window when he had his hair cut, so that the little wrens might find it, to line their nests with.

The little men then gathered around her, singing to her in the finest little voices she ever heard, and tinkling their little blue bells, until at last she fell asleep.

When she awoke she was sitting at the foot of the old tree, and the little men and their banquet had vanished; the sun was setting, and she ran quickly home, wondering if it was all a dream. For a long time after this she went and sat under the old tree very quiet; but she never again beheld the little green men of the forest.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. H. J. E. writes: "I am a young man who has been married nearly two years. My wife has a very high temper and gets mad at every little thing, and says she can't help it. What would you advise me to do to break her from getting out of humor at trifles? We are living a long way from our original homes and my wife is dissatisfied, and gets home-sick and wants to go back. But I can do better here than at our former home. Must I take her back home when I can't do as well for her as I can at our present home? I make enough to keep us comfortably and have some left yearly. Please answer soon as you can, as I am very anxious to get your advice." If your wife's desire to move comes solely from home sickness time will cure it. If it comes from more urgent reasons you should give them their full weight, as it is your duty to promote the happiness of your wife by every means in your power. As you are doing so much better there than you could do at your former home, we should advise you to remain there, unless there is something in the locality unendurable to your wife. You will certainly not cure her of a high temper by changing your place of residence. There is only one salve that we know of as a panacea for her complaint. That is, unflinching good humor on your part, and a constant effort to avoid causes of dispute. Never insist on carrying your point in a trifling matter, which usually is not worth the words wasted upon it; but save your energy for affairs of importance.

HORACE RANDOLPH (China Hill) writes: "I wish to ask one question, and will expect an answer through your paper. I am nineteen years of age, and have been visiting a girl of fifteen. She is a beautiful girl, good and intelligent, and I love her, if one ever was loved by another, but do not wish to marry for some time. Would you advise me to make my love known to her and continue my visits, or to cease visiting her?" We can appreciate your wish not to marry for some time. There would be no harm in telling her the story of your love after two or three more years have elapsed, providing you keep firm in your determination to wait still longer before marrying, say five or six years, which will bring both of you to more reasonable ages. She is too young now to think of love as a serious thing.

GEO. O. DEVINNISS (Canton, Mo.,) writes: "I have been a subscriber for your paper since 1852, except two or three years during the war, and as a literary paper you can, in my opinion, challenge the civilized world. Your answers to correspondents are find quite amusing. I see in an old number of Feb. 28th, 1870, a condensed history of steam, which calls me to ask a question. Where or from whom did Robert Fulton get his model? I saw many years since in Niles's Register that a man by the name of Johnston or Smith, I forget which of those names, propelled a small boat on the Potomac, at or near Shepardstown, though without accuracy, his boat going with a zigzag. I think this happened about 1787 or '90. I have always been impressed that Mr. Fulton drew his idea from this man or Fitch, or both?" Your praise of the Post is gratefully received. It is our hope and aim to make it what you so flatteringly declare it, and it is a gratification to receive so many testimonials of our success. Fitch's first successful experiments with the steamboat were made in 1787 and 1788. His vessel was run for hire in 1790, but the experiment was abandoned as unprofitable. He had a rival of the name of Ramsey, who is probably the person you allude to, as he obtained the right to practice steam navigation in Maryland and Virginia. Fitch's right was confined to the Middle States. Robert Fulton studied the powers of steam in England, and experimented with submarine torpedo boats in Paris before he made any experiments in America. He may have derived some benefit from the prior efforts of Fitch, but his ideas were, in great measure, his own, and the credit of producing a successful steamboat certainly belongs to him.

J. W. RUSSELL (Harland, Ind.) says: "I have a question for your 'Query' Department. There is a poem in McGuffie's 5th Reader where the word Trafalgar occurs ("pools of Trafalgar) and also in questions referring to said lesson is the following: 'Where is Trafalgar, and for what is it noted?' Now I cannot find it in Geography. I infer from Webster's definition that it means the Peninsula of Spain and Portugal, but that does not explain what it is *noted* for. Please inform, and much oblige an old subscriber. While I'm writing you, I would like to ask your opinion who you think the best author of a work on Astronomy?" Trafalgar is a Cape of Spain. It is situated on the coast of Andalusia, at the entrance to the Strait of Gibraltar. It is noted as the locality of a famous naval victory gained October 21st, 1805, by Lord Nelson, commanding the English fleet, over the combined French and Spanish squadrons. Nelson fell in the action, but lived long enough to know that victory had been achieved. A good work on Astronomy is "Herschel's Outlines of Astronomy." There have, however, been important discoveries since it was published, which you will find described in Lockyer's Elements of Astronomy, lately published.

S. M. W. writes: "Having noticed your prompt and decided answers to correspondents, I venture to propound a few. In the first place, I wish to ask if an article, in being prepared for the press, is necessarily obliged to be perfect in regard to orthography and punctuation, or if it goes through a rectifying process after reaching the printing office? Also, if the paper should be written upon both sides? I have written two stories, of I think medium merit as regards composition, but have never had the courage to offer them for publication. Do you receive articles from any who may choose to send, always providing they come up to the proper standard?" Publishers are often obliged to correct defects in manuscript, but do not like kindly to the task. Incorrect spelling and punctuation are always objectionable; and if they are very bad, manuscript may be rejected from this cause alone. Illegible penmanship is a fault even more vexatious. Your hand, however, is sufficiently readable, and your letter contains but two or three misspelt words. Your punctuation needs improvement. We are ready to receive articles from any quarter, and only require from them that they shall come up to the proper standard. Write only on one side of the paper.

HELPER asks: "You will oblige me by answering in your column of correspondence the two following questions: What is your opinion of the validity of Jay's title to the Cherokee neutral lands in the counties of Crawford and Cherokee? Also tell me the best time to trim the Osage hedge, and the different heights to leave it at the different cuttings." We prefer not to express an opinion on the case referred to, as we are not posted on the legal points of the claim, and our opinion would therefore be valueless. The Osage orange hedge should be cut in the early spring, the second or third year after planting, the time depending on the rapidity of its growth. The first time should be cut half through, about eight or twelve inches from the ground, and held by bending them down lengthwise of the hedge. They may be laid again two or three years afterwards, according to their growth. The height of this cutting must be left to the judgment of the cutter, as it depends on the condition of the hedge.

M. B. (Lincoln, O.) asks: "Can you give me the name of any newspaper published in Vineland, N. J.? Having land in the West, do you think I could sell or exchange it for other property better, or sooner, by advertising than by employing an Eastern land agent to do so? Do you know of any reliable land agent in Canada West, or the title of some newspaper published there in which I could advertise? Where can one get a list, if there is such a thing, of the various articles that ranks as exports from the United States to Great Britain? Is the Royal Havana Lottery a reliable concern, and who are its accredited agents? I ask you this because I have told some of my young friends that it is like all other bogus concerns, a complete humbug; but they insist that it is not so, and we appeal to you for facts. I hope I have not tried your patience by so many questions. Please excuse me, as I have only availed myself of the privilege (a great one) which you give to all subscribers to the Post." The "Vineland Independent" is the Vineland organ. We should advise advertising in preference to employing a land agent, as it will bring your case before a much larger circle of people. There would be no harm, though, in trying both plans. We do not know the address of any Canada land agents. For papers we will name the "Montreal Witness," "Toronto Leader," and "Quebec Gazette." You can probably obtain a list of American exports by writing to the Custom House authorities. The Royal Havana lottery is a reliable concern, being under the direct control of the Cuban government, and employed for the purpose of adding to the Spanish revenues. This last clause renders it very improbable that your friends can add much to their revenues by dabbling in it. Buying lottery tickets is a poor business.

H. L. T. (Seneca, Mo.,) writes: "In an old catalogue of books, published by T. B. Peterson, Philadelphia, are the following works—'German Without a Master,' also 'French,' 'Italian,' 'Spanish,' and 'Latin Without a Master.' If such works are still published, you will greatly oblige me by informing me whether a knowledge of the languages they profess to teach can be obtained by their use—also, where I can get them." The works in quest on are still published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., and you can obtain them by mail, by writing to this firm. You will find them useful in studying the languages in question—but if you have devoted any attention to the study of language, you will know that no language can be be mastered by the use of a single work, and that pronunciation can not be correctly acquired without the aid of a teacher.

A MINER (Barclay, Pa.,) says: "I want you to let us know whether there are more negroes in the United States than whites; as A has bet B that there are more negroes than whites; and we leave it to you to decide. And I want you to answer me another quest on, if you please. That is, how much will it cost from New York to Victoria, Vancouver's Island, Pacific Ocean, by water?" There are about eight times as many whites as there are negroes in the United States. In regard to your second question we would advise you to write to the office of the Panama Steamboat Company in New York. They will give you the information desired.

C. B. (Piffle, O.,) asks: "Please inform me, through the Correspondents' column, where, in the United States telescopes are manufactured, and by whom." The most successful manufacturer in the United States is Alvin Clark of Cambridge, Mass. He has produced some instruments that challenge competition, and have not their superiors in the world.

NELLIE (Greenfield, Ind.,) writes: "Will you please tell me, in your 'Answers to Correspondents,' where Will M. Carleton, the 'Farm Ballads,' was born, and where he now lives? and you will oblige a great admirer of your paper." We believe he resides in one of the Western states—Illinois or Indiana—but have seen no biographical notice of the gentleman. He is not yet famous enough to have achieved a biographer.

AGRICULTURAL.

Tic His Ear.

A groom mounted on a high-mettled hunter, entered the High Street of Coldstream, and when opposite Sir John Marjoribanks's monument the horse began to plunge and rear to a fearful extent, swerving to the right and then to the left, but go forward he would not, nor could all the exertions of the groom overcome his obstinacy. The street was filled with people expecting to see the animal destroy himself on the spikes of the iron railing round the monument, when Mr. McDougall, saddler, walked up to the groom and said, "I think, my man, you are not taking the proper method to make the horse go; allow me, if you please, to show you a trick worth knowing." "Well," said the groom, "if you can make him go, it's more than I can;" when Mr. McDougall took a piece of whip-cord, which he tied with a firm knot on the end of the animal's ear, which he bent gently down, fastening the end of the string to the check-buckle of the bridle; this done, he patted the horse's neck once or twice, and said, "Now let me see you go quietly home like a good horse." Astonishing to relate, the horse moved off as gently as if nothing had happened. Mr. McDougall says he has seen in London, horses which no manner of force could make go, while this mild treatment was always successful.

Farm Items.

THE tomato vine, it is stated, by the New York Evening Post, is covered with a colorless dust or dye, perfectly undistinguishable by the eye, and only to be recognized after immersion in water, to which it communicates a dark green color. After picking a few tomatoes, the hands, though in contact with the vines, will appear perfectly clean. If the hands, however, be washed, the water, it is stated, will exhibit a decidedly green shade.

AN Iowa paper says that a drover near Knoxville, let forty-two hogs go without water, one hot day last week, and that they all died in consequence.

IT is stated that in the case of cows giving little milk, putting them on very poor pastures, where they will have to work hard to find enough to eat, will cause the milk secretion to entirely cease in a week or ten days.

THE RIDDLER.

Riddle.

The instant I'm born, though my frame is quite weak,
Most wondrous to utter, I smartly can speak;
My parents are pleased and greatly rejoice,
And seem quite enraptured to hear my sweet voice;
But short, ah! too short is the time that I stay,
For when I've done speaking I languish away;
Yet this to my parents but seldom gives pain,
For they with a touch can call life back again.
Now, ye fair girls, and ye cheerful young swains,
Come search for my name, and take me for your pains.

Biblical Enigma.

I am composed of 25 letters.

My 1, 8, 12, 3, 20, is a plant found in barren places.

My 7, 15, 23, 5, 1, was a celebrated seaport of Idumea.

My 12, 22, 3, 19, 18, is a variegated precious stone.

My 14, 2, 22, 24, 13, was an idol of the Philistines.

My 16, 11, 10, 9, 4, is an Oriental fruit.

My 21, 8, 6, 12, 13, was a distinguished Levite.

My 25, 2, 17, 10, 14, was a King of Israel.

My whole is a Bible Command.

ISOLA.

Word Square.

A division of time.
A musical drama.
At no time.
To negotiate.
A species of deer—plural.

EVE.

Conundrums.

☞ Why does a victorious base ball club resemble a range of mountains? Ans.—Because they ate the "'Appy nine," (Apennine.)

☞ What character in the Bible was always in a row? Ans.—Amos (a muse.)

☞ What creature may be said to live on its relation? Ans.—The ant-eater.

☞ Why was Herodias's daughter like the Fenians? Ans.—Because she had a head sent her. (Head centre.)

☞ Why is an heir apparent to a throne like an umbrella in dry weather? Ans.—Because he's ready for the next reign.

☞ What is the difference between a sick girl and a brick-bat? Ans.—One is a miss ill and the other a missile.

☞ Why is the letter "d" like the marriage service? Ans.—Because it makes "we" into "wed."

☞ A letter carrier's conundrum. Why are people in muggy weather like letters? Ans.—Because their clothes become adhesive envelopes.

☞ *In the Washing Line.*—Why is the Louise tartan certain to wash well? Ans.—Because it is intended for the lorne-dress. [We print this at the request of his mourning relatives, as the last literary effort of a gentleman deceased. He had only just perpetrated it when he came unexpectedly into collision with our office poker. The verdict was "Justifiable homicide," and the poker is only slightly bent.]

☞ Why are good women like ivy? Ans.—Because the greater the ruin the closer they cling?

☞ Why are bad women like ivy? Ans.—Because the closer they cling the greater the ruin!

Answers to Last.

ENIGMA—"'Tis only noble to be good." RIDDLE—Summer. QUESTION—Bunhadad. (Bun—hey dad?)

WORD SQUARE—

BRAG
ROME
AMEN
GENT

RECEIPTS.

PRESERVING GREEN CORN.—I have preserved corn for years. I arrange it in this way:—A layer of salt two inches in depth, then one of corn in the same proportion, so on until the jar is full, always putting a layer of salt at the top. After standing over night it makes a pickle, which rises to the top. Then I pack on an inch more of salt and tie over it very thick brown paper and set aside for use. I will be glad to know if any one thinks they would like my method. I hope to hear from some one.—*M. W. A. Deerfield, N. J.*

STAINS.—If you have been picking or handling any acid fruit and have stained your hands, wash them in clear water, wipe them lightly and while they are yet moist, strike a match and shut your hands around it so as to catch the smoke, and the stains will disappear.

If you have stained your muslin or gingham dress, or your white pants, with berries, before wetting the cloth with anything else, pour boiling water through the stains and they will disappear. Before fruit juice dries it often can be removed by cold water, using a sponge or towel, if necessary. Rubbing the fingers with the inside of the parings of apples, will remove most of the stain caused by paring.

Ink also if it be washed out, or sopped up from the carpet, with cold water immediately when it is spilled, can be almost entirely removed.